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11 Arts & Entertainment
Stanley Kubrick:
The last odyssey



7 International
Lewinsky meets
the public



20 Sports
Duke tops
the charts

INDEX

Arts & Entertainment	11
Business	12
Living	10
Movies, TV, Crossword	19
Opinion	8
Sports	20

Jerusalem court to hand down Deri verdict next Wednesday

By DAN IZENBERG and LIAT COLLINS

The verdict in the trial of Shas leader Aryeh Deri will be handed down on Wednesday, March 17, at 10 a.m., in the main chamber of the Jerusalem District Court, courts spokesman Moshe Goral said yesterday.

According to Goral, there is room for 100 people in the chamber. The seats will be distributed among relatives of Deri and the three other defendants, journalists, and the general public, Goral said further

details about the procedures would be released closer to the date of the hearing. President Ezer Weizman yesterday called on Shas mentor Rabbi Ovadia Yosef and the other Shas leaders to ensure that no matter what the verdict, it would not result in disturbances by Shas supporters. He noted that the recent huge prayer vigil over the judiciary had passed quietly, and he hoped that under the influence of the party's leaders, the same would be true after the verdict.

The political establishment also pre-

pared for the Deri verdict.

Shas MKs earlier this week asked that the verdict be postponed until after the elections. Yesterday they toned down their calls. "I trust the courts to act out of the correct considerations. In my opinion this has not yet happened, but I really hope it will," said Interior Minister Eli Shussman during a tour of the South with Deri.

"Ultimately, I think that no matter what decision is taken, it is intervention in the elections. Even if it is a good decision. No one should complain afterward that it has

a part in the momentum of the election campaign."

He said that Shas is convinced of Deri's innocence.

Deri refused to relate to the case. Channel 2 reported that Deri has been trying to negotiate a plea bargain with the State Attorney's Office, under which some of the charges would be dropped in return for his leaving public life for a certain period. If Deri is convicted of a charge involving "moral turpitude," he will not be able to serve as a minister in the future.

The State Attorney's Office rejected the report.

Meanwhile, security has been increased for the three judges who have presided over the case - Ya'acov Zenah, Miriam Naor, and Moussia Arad. Court officials, headed by Jerusalem District Court President Vardimon Zeiler, met twice in the past week to discuss the security and technical arrangements for the hearing, which is bound to rivet public and international attention.

Over the past several years, Shas sup-

porters have held demonstrations, some of them violent, and court officials are concerned that there may be an outbreak of violence in or around the courthouse if Deri is convicted on any of the four counts on which he has been indicted.

He is charged with taking bribes, fraud, violating the public trust, and falsifying corporate documents. The other defendants are Moshe Weinberg, his father Aryeh, and Yoni Tov Rubin. The trial officially began in 1993, though the hearings actually got underway the following year.



Meretz leader Yossi Sarid (left) and Arutz 7 director Ya'acov Katz glare at each other just before the opening of yesterday's High Court hearing. (Brian Hadden)

High Court delays Arutz 7 legalization

Justice Barak to expand panel to hear both sides' arguments in two weeks

By DAN IZENBERG

Both sides claimed victory yesterday, as the High Court of Justice issued an injunction against implementation of the law legalizing Arutz 7, but declined to temporarily repeal the measure.

Justices Theodor Orr, Dorit Beinisch, and Tova Strasburg-Cohen gave the sides 14 days to prepare their arguments in writing regarding the petitioner's main demand - repeal of the Bezez Law, amendment which retroactively legalized Arutz 7 and all other pirate radio stations which have been broadcasting at least five years and reach most of the country.

The justices added that, because of its importance, they would ask Supreme Court President Aharon Barak to expand the panel of jus-

tics dealing with the case. It is one of the few times the court has been asked to rule on the legality of a law passed by the Knesset.

"The court prevented the implementation of the law," said MK

Pirate radio station manager charged, Page 2

Haim Oron (Meretz), one of the six petitioners. "It said it wouldn't allow it to be carried out for the time being. The substantive issue, which is very problematic, very constitutional, will be aired during the hearings on the petition itself."

MK Zvi Hendel (National Religious Party), who initiated the amendment in the form of a person-

al addition to the Budgetary Arrangements Law, said the court "will discuss the law in two weeks, as we requested. It did not repeal it, as the petitioners had requested."

"The results are definitely satisfactory from our point of view, but we have a strange habit of supporting the High Court's decisions both when we like them and when we don't," said Meretz leader Yossi Sarid. "In either event, we show respect for the court and believe its decisions are taken only out of pertinent considerations."

The petitioners have asked the court to repeal the amendment on two grounds: It violates the fundamental elements of the law, since it retroactively legalizes illegal conduct, and it was approved by an improper Knesset procedure.

Hendel is represented by attorney Dan Sela, while attorney Renato Yarak is representing Arutz 7. Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein, who strongly opposed the legislation, has made it clear he will not represent the state in the case. The Knesset, which is also named in the petitions, will be represented by its legal representative.

Only two of the petitioners - representing regional radio stations Radio Haifa and Radio North - asked the court to temporarily repeal the law.

The request turned out to be hypothetical, since the procedures for putting it into effect were completed three days ago, when it was published in *Reshumot*, the official gazette.

See COURT, Page 2

UNIFIL spokesman tells 'Post': Hizbullah rejects changes to 1996 understandings

By DAVID RUDGE

Hizbullah is committed to the April 1996 Grapes of Wrath understandings and will not countenance any changes in them. Its leader, Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, declared yesterday.

Nasrallah spoke during a meeting with Timur Goksel, UNIFIL's senior political adviser, at his headquarters in Beirut's southern suburbs.

"He reiterated that Hizbullah would not accept any changes in the understandings. He also made it clear that they only fire Katyusha rockets [at Israeli territory] in direct response to hits on Lebanese civilians. He said they had done so on three occasions since April 1996, and each one had been announced," Goksel told *The Jerusalem Post* after returning to UNIFIL's headquarters in Nakoura.

Hizbullah will continue to retain Katyushas as its main weapon to defend Lebanese civilians and will use them against Israel if necessary, Nasrallah said. He stressed that "the rockets are not used on a regular basis [in the fighting in south Lebanon]."

It was Goksel's first ever meeting with Nasrallah, who has been secretary-general of Hizbullah since 1992. The meeting lasted for over an hour and led to speculation in Lebanon that it might have been part of attempts to prevent an escalation of fighting in the south.

Tension in Lebanon reached a peak last week following the deaths of Brig.-Gen. Erez Gerstein, head of the IDF's Liaison Unit to south Lebanon, his driver, radio operator, and Israel Radio's northern reporter Ilan Roeh, as well as three officers from the elite Paratroop Reconnaissance Unit in separate

Hizbullah attacks.

According to Lebanese press reports, UNIFIL was involved, along with the US, France, and other international elements. In intense diplomatic efforts to calm the situation, especially when it appeared at one stage that Israel might launch a large-scale retaliatory operation.

Goksel, however, in answer to questions by Lebanese reporters after his meeting with Nasrallah, quashed the speculation, saying that he had not conveyed any messages to the Hizbullah leader.

He maintained that the issue of a possible IDF withdrawal from the security zone had not been raised, nor had Nasrallah given any indication of Hizbullah's plans in the event of Israel pulling out of south Lebanon.

See HIZBULLAH, Page 2

Arens: Peace with Syria would cost the Golan

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

As the United States moves to revive the stalled Israeli-Syrian peace talks, Defense Minister Moshe Arens said yesterday that the only way Damascus will make peace is if Israel withdraws from the entire Golan Heights. He is against paying that price.

"This is my position. There is no chance of reaching agreement with Syria without totally conceding the Golan Heights. That is the

price. There are those who are ready to pay it. I think that this is a price we should not pay. I don't think the Syrians should be allowed to come down to the water line," Arens told military reporters in his office yesterday.

US Assistant Secretary of State Martin Indyk is to meet with Syrian President Hafez Assad in Damascus on Sunday, reportedly to discuss the resumption of peace talks after the elections here. Indyk's Middle East sweep

will apparently not include Israel.

Reiterating what he told *The Jerusalem Post* last week, Arens said that Israel is reexamining the Grapes of Wrath understandings and looking at alternatives that will allow the IDF to benefit from its might.

He noted that while Lebanon has the trappings of an independent state, it is controlled by Syria.

See ARENS, Page 2

The law doesn't solve the Arutz 7 problem

The petitions against the law legalizing Arutz 7 and other pirate radio stations ask the High Court of Justice to take one of the most difficult and controversial actions imaginable: to declare a law passed by the Knesset null and void.

A basic principle of a parliamentary democracy is that the parliament has unlimited power. Our Supreme Court applies judicial review only when the law in question is claimed to be contradictory to a basic law (our half-formed constitution) or when the parliamentary process was seriously flawed.

ANALYSIS

By HILLES SOMMER

In the current petitions, both arguments are used. First, it is claimed that the law violates the law of the land, such as the freedom of occupation of the legally licensed stations and the principle of equality; and second, that the law did not complete the full parliamentary process, as it was added as a last-minute amendment to a law on a totally different subject, thus escaping the first stages of the legislative process.

Yesterday's court order is temporary. The justices, walking a thin line, did not declare the law unconstitutional, not even on a temporary basis. But they temporarily blocked the application of the controversial law by ordering the government and the Second Television and Radio Authority temporarily not to act upon it.

See ANALYSIS, Page 2

Baseball legend Joe DiMaggio dies at 84

NEW YORK (AP) - Joe DiMaggio, the elegant Yankee Clipper whose 56-game hitting streak endures as one of the most remarkable records in baseball or any sport, died yesterday at his home in Hollywood, Florida. He was 84.

DiMaggio, who underwent lung cancer surgery in October and battled a series of complications for weeks afterward, died shortly after midnight, said Morris Engelberg, his longtime friend and attorney.

At his bedside were his brother, Dominick, a former major league outfielder; two grandchildren; Engelberg; and Joe Nacchio, his friend of 59 years.

DiMaggio's body will be flown to Northern California for burial in his hometown of San Francisco, Engelberg said.

"DiMaggio, the consummate gentleman on and off the field, fought his illness as hard as he played the game of baseball and with the same dignity, style and grace with which he lived his life," said Engelberg, DiMaggio's next-door neighbor.

When DiMaggio left the hospital January 19, he was invited by New York Yankees owner George Steinbrenner to throw out the ceremonial first ball at the Yankees' home opener April 9. After DiMaggio came home from the hospital, a sign was placed on his bed saying "April 9 Yankee Stadium or Bust."

Steinbrenner said today he visited a weak but alert DiMaggio five days ago to remind him of the invitation. "He just smiled," Steinbrenner said.

Baseball commissioner Bud Selig called DiMaggio "the personification of grace, class and dignity on the baseball diamond. As an immigrant's son, he represented the hopes and ideals of our great country."

The New York Yankees' center fielder roamed the bases for 13 years through 1951, missing three seasons to serve in World War II.

During that time he played for 10 pennant winners and nine World Series champions, batted .325 and hit 361 home runs. But more than anything it was



Joe DiMaggio throws out the first ball at Yankee Stadium on April 10, 1951. (Reuters)

The Streak, during the magical summer of '41, that riveted a country fresh from the Depression and elevated him from baseball

star to national celebrity. He ascended even higher atop the rank of popular culture in 1954 when he wed Marilyn

Monroe, a storybook marriage that failed all too quickly and left him brokenhearted. For years after she died in 1962, DiMaggio sent roses for her grave but refused to talk about her.

His swanky swing and classy countenance inspired witty lines in literature and song, including Paul Simon's lament to lost heroes in "Mrs. Robinson" from the movie *The Graduate*: "Where have you gone Joe DiMaggio? A nation turns its lonely eyes to you. What's that you say, Mrs. Robinson? Joltin' Joe has left and gone away."

Indeed, but his legend stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the likes of Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig and very few others who could measure up to them on the sports scene this century.

He won three American League Most Valuable Player awards, appeared in 11 All-Star games and entered the Hall of Fame in 1955. For half a century, he was known as "the greatest living player."

See DIMAGGIO, Page 18

NEWS

in brief

Sharon to Europe: Don't recognize Palestinian state

Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon has urged his European counterparts not to recognize a unilaterally declared Palestinian state, according to a letter released yesterday. Sharon told the EU foreign ministers in a letter dated February 21 that a unilateral declaration of statehood would violate the Israeli-Palestinian peace agreements, an official said. Any proposals to compensate the Palestinians for not declaring a state on May 4 by supporting such a unilateral declaration at a later stage "are not only counterproductive, they are tantamount to complicity in a violation of the agreements signed to date," Sharon wrote, according to the official. AP

Kurdish leader seeks Arafat meeting

Kurdish leader Massoud Barzani, whose Kurdistan Democratic Party controls parts of northern Iraq, is seeking Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat's intervention in dealings with Baghdad, the PLO official said yesterday. "We are prepared to hold this meeting... which could take place in two weeks' time," the official added, saying that the PLO had "intervened several times in the past between the Kurds and the Baghdad government." He said the meeting was being arranged by the PLO's ambassador to Iraq, Azzam Ahmad, and that it would not be held in the Palestinian Authority. Reuters

IDF expels Lebanese policeman from zone

The IDF yesterday expelled a Lebanese police officer from the security zone. Lebanese security officials said, Zeid Youssef Sriwi, 47, a Shi'ite police officer, was expelled from his village, Hasbaya, said the officials. Sriwi had been freed a week earlier from Khiam prison, in the security zone, where he was held for 13 months. It was not known why he was imprisoned. Israeli intelligence agents apparently dropped Sriwi about 4 km. from a Lebanese army checkpoint on the edge of the security zone, the officials said. He walked to the checkpoint and was received by Lebanese Army troops. AP

Beilin to meet with Mubarak adviser in Cairo

Labor MK Yossi Beilin plans to meet in Cairo Thursday with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's advisor Osama el-Baz, as well as with Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa. Beilin said yesterday that the issues on their agenda was the question of May 4th, when the Palestinians have said they want to declare statehood, and regional development. Dunna Harman

PM pledges funds for Tel Aviv subway

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu again promised yesterday that the government will provide the budget for the construction of a subway in Tel Aviv. Speaking at a cornerstone laying ceremony for a new railway line between Rosh Ha'ayin and Tel Aviv, Netanyahu said Tel Aviv has become a large metropolis and that it needs trains to connect it with outlying suburbs to solve its future transportation problems. Haim

Berger gets praying privilege

Chaim Berger, 74, who was placed under house arrest by the Jerusalem District Court Sunday, is permitted to leave his apartment twice a day to attend prayers at a nearby synagogue, his lawyer Yehuda Tunik said yesterday. Berger is fighting a US request to extradite him on charges of embezzling \$20 million in government funds in New York in 1997. He was released from jail on \$5 million bail after Agudat Yisrael's Council of Sages and Deputy Housing Minister Meir Porush appeared in court to sign personal guarantees he would not abscond. AP

High Court to hear petition against Galili promotion today

By DAN IZENBERG

Defense Minister Moshe Arens and Chief of General Staff Lt. Gen. Shaul Mofaz weighed the pros and cons of promoting Brig. Gen. Nir Galili, accused of having raped a soldier three years ago, and found that his distinguished service outweighed the blemish in his behavior, the State Attorney's Office wrote this week in a deposition to the High Court of Justice.

The first hearing in the petition against his promotion is to be heard today.

The alleged victim, whose name has been withheld from publication, has asked the court to cancel Galili's promotion and to court-martial him.

Galili was due to be given the rank of major-general, and appointed commander of a corps

on March 4, but the army postponed the ceremony until today's hearing.

The woman, represented by Attorney Yaron Keidar, has also asked for a temporary injunction suspending the promotion and appointment until the court rules on her petition. She has charged that Galili raped her on March 12, 1996 and that IDF Judge Advocate General Brig. Gen. Uri Shoham dissuaded her from pressing charges because of Galili's senior position in the IDF.

Uri Corin, senior assistant to the State Attorney, wrote that according to Shoham's investigation, there was no proof that Galili had had intercourse with the woman and that the two had had voluntary sexual relations without intercourse prior to that night. During the investigation of her

complaint in 1996, she had admitted that she had reached sexual satisfaction with Galili before that night and that she had continued to have sexual relations on the night of the alleged rape.

Corin also wrote that Shoham had nevertheless found that the relationship between the woman, then 19, and Galili, then 40, and her direct commander, was "unsuitable and unacceptable," and that he was guilty of "inappropriate behavior." He had been punished by having his advancement in the army suspended for two years and 10 months, wrote Corin.

In weighing the case, the IDF had taken into account that Galili "was one of the best fighters and commanders in the army," and that he had served in the army for 26 years, in "difficult and exhausting" assignments and "had much to his credit as a result."

"Ultimately, what was taken into consideration was the incident which, in general, weighed against him, versus his glorious military service and the great and unique contribution he can make to the army, which weighed in his favor," she wrote. "The scale tipped in his direction."

The State Attorney's office also opposed the woman's request for a temporary injunction. Corin also wrote that Galili's new unit is about to conduct major maneuvers and that he was appointed at this time in order to be in charge of it. "It is very important that the person who is in command of the unit in the exercise will be in charge of it during wartime," she wrote.

Heidi J. Gleit adds: The Israel Women's Network condemned the decision to promote Galili.

"The IWN finds the decision of the judge advocate general is based on stereotypes about women who complain about rape," the network's spokeswoman Orly Salitzanu said. "More than 80 percent of rapes are committed by people who are known to the victim."

The IDF Spokesman said that the IDF encourages female soldiers to report sexual harassment and tries to address their complaints as quickly and efficiently as possible.

New recruits receive a brochure defining sexual harassment and explaining who to turn to if they are harassed.

The Women's Brigade also has a 24-hour hotline (03-569-7110) that female soldiers can call to report sexual harassment, or other problems.

Bondak charged with supporting terrorism

By DAN IZENBERG

Jerusalem Magistrate's Court Judge Uri Ben-Dor yesterday ordered Yisrael Bondak, a pirate radio broadcaster, charged with calling for the murder of MK Yossi Sarid, released on bail of NIS 200,000.

Bondak, who runs the pirate radio station *Kol Hamizrach*, had been detained for 24 hours. He gave himself up on Sunday after police issued a warrant for his arrest. Ben-Dor rejected the state attorney's request to have Bondak placed under house for the duration of the trial.

The state attorney also submitted its indictment to the court. Bondak is charged with supporting a terrorist organization by violating the Prevention of Terrorism Order.

"By his actions," wrote the State Attorney's Office, "the accused orally issued words of support for acts of violence which could lead to the death or injury of another person, or threats of same." Bondak was also accused of broadcasting without a license.

The indictment quoted Bondak as saying in his broadcast of Friday, March 5, in broken English: "I am the gringo. Fernando Sancho and today I go to kill the Yusuf Sarid, because the Yusuf does not love the religion, because the Yusuf is not love the radio, because the Yusuf pays heed to the High Court of Justice. And today I go to kill the Yusuf, let's go muchachos. And today I go to kill the Yusuf."

State attorney representative Orit Korev told the court that Bondak constituted a threat to the public, and particularly to Sarid. Ben-Dor rejected Korev's request and ordered Bondak to put up NIS 100,000 in bail money and find a third party to do the same. He also ordered him to report to the police once a week.

Bondak blamed the press for his predicament. "The fact is that I'm a victim of you, the left-wing media which is working for Meretz in the elections," he told reporters. "From what I've seen in the last three days, I take my hat off to Yossi Sarid because of his power."



En route to Mecca

Palestinian Muslims making the Haj pilgrimage board an airplane to Mecca at the Gaza International Airport in Rafah yesterday. This is the first time Gazan Palestinians have been able to fly directly to Saudi Arabia. West Bank residents must still travel to Mecca via Amman. (Text: Jerusalem Post Staff; Photo: AP)

Panel okays bill to end tax on non-farm land

By NINA GILBERT

The Knesset Finance Committee yesterday approved for final reading legislation that would rescind the annual property tax on non-agricultural land, in what all sides called the cancellation of an unjust law.

The bill is to be brought soon for approval before the next special

session of the House, now in recess for the elections.

It calls for the tax to be canceled by January 1, 2000. The Treasury estimates the move would cost NIS 900m. Some NIS 300m. is to be recouped by a number of changes, including applying the 2.5 percent tax to land sales.

Under the reform, contractors are to also benefit from the cancellation

of taxes on unsold apartments, and are to instead pay an extra 0.8% on sales that are tax deductible. Extra funding is also to be raised from an increase in tax on the purchase of a second apartment.

Buyers would pay 3.5% on a price of up to NIS 684,000 and 5% beyond that.

The bill would also allow the finance minister to give discounts on accumulated debts owed through 1998.

On the eve of the budget vote, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu promised to advance the reform.

Finance Minister Meir Sheerit said after yesterday's session that he had worked on the legislation as an MK, and had promised that as soon as he became minister the tax "would go away forever."

"I am happy to tell the 120,000 who are suffering from this distorted tax that it will be cancelled. I have no doubt that the law will pass by a great majority," he said.

Labor MK Avraham Shohat said the opposition had been pushing for three years in the committee to get the measure approved, "but the previous finance ministers kept hold-

ing it up."

This is "certainly no accomplishment for Netanyahu," he added. "It was brought now perhaps because of the elections, and also perhaps the finance minister sees things differently."

Shohat said that when he was finance minister he had initiated many other reforms in property tax, including for those with small plots, and wanted to first see how these things worked. He said that the moment the Gabbai Committee recommendations were approved, the opposition pressured the government to implement them. The committee's conclusions on reforming the land tax system serve as the main basis for the legislation.

Democratic Arab Party MK Taleb a-Sanaa said there is no doubt that the "lifting of the law is near to the elections and part of the elections propaganda. But there is no doubt that this is also the correct step." However, he said "the voting of the Arab sector will not only be over the issue of property tax, but on a wide variety of issues, including equality and the peace process, areas in which the government failed in a big way."

HIZBULLAH

Continued from Page 1

Goksel, who has been UNIFIL's spokesman virtually since the inception of the force after the Litani Operation in 1978, said the meeting had been arranged at the request of both sides. It had been on the agenda for some time, but prior commitments on the part of Nasrallah and himself had only made it possible for the meeting to go ahead when it did.

"I was asked whether I had brought any messages, to which I replied that I'm not a postman," Goksel said. "We spoke only about the situation in south Lebanon. UNIFIL is based in south Lebanon and Sheikh Nasrallah is originally from the south, so we had a lot of things to discuss."

Goksel stressed that the meeting was part of UNIFIL's continuous contacts with Hizbullah to discuss the situation in south Lebanon.

He was asked by Lebanese reporters for UNIFIL's evaluation of the situation and whether there were any unusual IDF movements on the ground.

"The situation at the moment is quiet, but there is still tension. As regards movements on the ground, things are very much the same and

nothing has changed in the past weeks," he said.

Goksel flew into Beirut airport in a UNIFIL helicopter and was driven to Nasrallah's headquarters in a UN car. He was asked about his impressions of the Hizbullah leader.

"He is very well informed about the situation in south Lebanon and Israeli politics, according to the comments he made. He is obviously very perceptive and has a sharp mind," said Goksel, who spoke to Nasrallah through an interpreter.

ARENS

Continued from Page 1

"Nothing happens there if Syria doesn't want it to happen," Arens said. "Lebanon is an independent country, but - without any disrespect for its government and leaders - it's all a charade."

Therefore, he said, significant talks over a settlement there can only be conducted with the Syrians.

Arens said that the US had asked Israel not to take any unilateral steps regarding the village of Amoun. The mostly abandoned village on the approaches to the IDF position at Beaufort Castle has been the site of non-violent protests by scores of Lebanese students, who

ripped down a fence erected by the IDF and SLA to prevent guerrillas from infiltrating into the security zone.

Lebanon has protested that by fencing in the village Israel was enlarging the security zone. Israel has said that the village has always been in the zone. The IDF has refrained from replacing the fence, which was torn down last Sunday.

Indyk plans to hold meetings in Turkey, Syria, Jordan, and perhaps Morocco. Officially his trip is to focus on issues pertaining to Iraq and the Iraqi opposition, but US officials said it is expected he will take the opportunity to discuss Lebanon and the peace process.

Danna Harman contributed to this report.

ANALYSIS

Continued from Page 1

The most interesting, yet unresolved, issue is whether Attorney General Elyakim Rubinstein, who opposed the law, will decide to defend the Knesset.

A careful review of the law, as passed, reveals that even if it is held to be constitutional, it will not resolve the status of Arutz 7 or of the Shas stations. First, the law will

Institute for Near East Policy.

Eizenstat said that in his meeting with Defense Minister Moshe Arens, he had said that the US considers the aid to both Israel and the Palestinians "to be part of one package" that "would be considered together."

"Just like the Israeli and Palestinian economies are locked at the hip, so too, in a practical manner, is this aid package. We believe Congress will consider the Palestinian and Israeli aid together," he said.

Eizenstat painted a gloomy picture of the current state of Middle East "countries' economies and intra-regional trade, but he said there are some "encouraging signs" and offered a number of principles that he said guide the American effort to improve the status quo.

Only 7 percent of trade between countries is intra-regional, "globalization is late coming to the Middle East," and only 1 percent of the

world's investments are in the region, Eizenstat said, all of which keep the Middle East "far from reaching its potential."

The US is on the verge of signing an agreement that would assign to the "Gateway" area near the Jordan-Israel border the status of a "qualified industrial zone," jointly exempting products from American tariffs. Irbid has already been granted such status.

During his meetings in Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinian territories last week, Eizenstat and the parties agreed to establish a monetary goal for increasing trade with Amman, so that Jordan may begin to reap the economic benefits of its 1994 peace treaty with Israel.

Eizenstat also requested that Israel compile a "closure-proof list" of Palestinian businessmen who could enjoy free access to Israel and between the West Bank and Gaza. Eizenstat said he "found a receptivity to this proposal."

are the following: Arutz 7 will have to be politically balanced; will not be able to serve any political cause, and will not be able to broadcast national news. Any violation of the above may bring penalties and the revocation of the license.

It is easy to see, therefore, that the law will not resolve the Arutz 7 problem, even if the court holds it to be constitutional.

The writer is a lecturer at the Radzymer Law School, Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya.

COURT

Continued from Page 1

Yesterday's discussion revolved around Rubinstein's request to issue an injunction preventing the government, the communications minister and the Second Radio and Television Channel Authority from implementing the new law.

Yarak and Sela argued that the court could only issue a temporary injunction if it could be proven the petitioner would suffer severe and immediate damage if the disputed act was not halted immediately. These conditions did not apply in this case, they argued.

But Daphna Holz-Lechner, representing Oron, claimed that legaliza-

tion of the pirate radio stations means an immediate loss of listeners and advertisers to the legally constituted regional radio stations.

Uzi Fogelman, head of the Justice Ministry's High Court petition division, said that as long as the new law is not implemented, the pirate radio stations remain illegal, because the steps necessary to legalize them - for example, allocation of an approved frequency - have not yet been carried out.

But Ya'acov Katz, of Arutz 7, disagreed. Referring to a comment by Strasburg-Cohen during the hearing, he said: "The law went into effect on March 4. Whoever has been broadcasting for over five years is now regarded as having a franchise."

Mein

Center

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MILLION

سكنا من الأمل

Elections99

Meimad, Labor sign agreement

By Danna Harman

Labor Party leader Ehud Barak and Meimad leaders signed an agreement in Tel Aviv last night to unite forces and work together under the new umbrella party, One Israel, led by Barak.

Under the agreement approved by the Labor central committee last week, the moderate religious movement, Meimad, will get one ministerial, non-Knesset member position, and positions 17, 33 and 38 on the One Israel list.

Meimad announced last night that 17 will be filled by Rabbi Michael Melchior, 33 by Rabbi Yehuda Gilad and 38 by Yolanda Fenenberg.

Walking into the balloon-filled ballroom at the Plaza Hotel, Barak was greeted by the Meimad council singing a rendition of "Heveinu Shalom Aleichem," by rabbis in knitted kippot who stood up to welcome him, and by young girls in long skirts and sneakers who held signs reading "One Meimad - One Israel."

And while the audience last night was different from the one that filled the Tel Aviv fairground earlier this week when Gesher held its convention, the mood was similar.

Barak heaped praise on his new Meimad partners, saying they gave One Israel the "Jewish, religious and democratic depth" it

needed to survive.

Rabbi Yehuda Amital, chairman of Meimad, also blessed the union, calling Barak "a true fighter and an honest man" and talked about how pleased the community was to have found their "political address."

"We are terrified of the chasms being created within our society," said Amital. "The growing distance between the secular and the orthodox. We know there needs to be a different way - a way with more Judaism and yet less religious coercion, a way of discussion. The relations among us must be restructured and Barak is our partner in this task."

Barak admitted that in the last

year and a half since the idea to work together with Meimad had been raised, he had had his doubts. "But obviously, since we are here tonight, there is proof not only that there is a God, but that he has come over to our side," said Barak.

He then put a kippa on and blessed the union with a "Shehechenu" after which, explaining that he felt more natural without it, he took the kippa off. "I am often asked how many seats Meimad will bring us," said Barak. "Actually, I'm not interested in seats, but rather in doors - and what doors this party will open for us."

Barak said that by merging with the religious Zionist Meimad, he

felt the Labor Party had come full circle, and that together, as a team, Meimad, Labor and Gesher would build the sort of broad, populist and democratic community that could properly rise to the occasion.

Prof. Avi Ravitzky, who is slated to be a minister if Barak wins the May 17 elections, talked about the significance the union with Labor has for Meimad. "We have been a cultural force, and an educational force, but now we are entering into the fray and see ourselves as a political force... that can lead a way. We aim to create a union in which, while we may not speak in the same voice, we at least speak the same language."

ELECTIONS

in brief

Lieberman case closed

State Attorney Edna Arbel announced yesterday that she had taken a decision, in consultation with senior officials, including Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein, to close the investigation into claims that Yisrael Beiteinu leader and former director-general of the Prime Minister's Office Avigdor Lieberman had not paid back a loan to the Gesher Aliya group.

She said there had been a lack of evidence in the case, which was opened in March 1997, after a complaint was filed that Lieberman had taken a loan from the non-profit organization in 1992 for NIS 111,000 and not repaid it. Lieberman said he had taken out a NIS 30,000 loan, and returned the money after nine months.

In response to Arbel's decision, Lieberman said yesterday: "I always knew that the charges were baseless and that the truth would eventually come out."

Jerusalem Post Staff

Poraz receives threatening letter

Shinui has complained to police about a hate letter received by MK Avraham Poraz (Shinui) which compares him to Hitler, Stalin and Haman and calls him an antisemite. It continues: "Throughout Israeli history it has been proven that whoever fights the religion of Israel is scattered by the wind and is doomed."

The letter also says: "The Arabs also don't serve in the IDF, why don't you fight them? The identity of the author was not given, but he or she was said to be deranged."

Itim

Third Way re-elects Kahalani as leader

The Third Way Council last night unanimously endorsed Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani to continue as party leader. The decision was a foregone conclusion as Kahalani was the only candidate for the post. Next week the party is expected to choose its Knesset list and there might be more tension then, particularly between MKs Yehuda Harel and Emanuel Zissmann who are competing for the second slot after Kahalani. The fourth Third Way MK elected to the current Knesset, Alex Lubotzky, defected to Dan Meridor's camp in the Center Party.

Liat Collins

Ex-Labor Holon branch head defects to Likud

Aharon Nasi, a former head of the Labor Party's Holon branch, has informed Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that he has joined the Likud and will support Netanyahu in the elections. Nasi and Labor Party leader Ehud Barak fell out during the municipal election campaign a few months ago, and he supported the Likud candidate for Holon mayor. As a result, Nasi was ousted as head of Labor's local branch.

Meanwhile, Channel 2 reported last night that the prime minister's political adviser Uri Aloni has promised 150 of the Gesher members who returned to the Likud that they would become members of the Likud central committee.

Liat Collins, Danna Harman

Shahak foresees three-party coalition

Center Party candidate Amnon Lipkin-Shahak said yesterday that he could envision a three-party coalition after the elections, which would leave out the small parties.

Shahak, speaking at the city hall in Kfar Sava yesterday, said that "perhaps we will find, for the first time ever, three major parties working together to unite powers."

Speaking at the Herzog High School in Kfar Sava, Shahak said that earlier in the campaign he had suggested to Labor Party leader Ehud Barak that they make a pact whereby a week or two before the elections the party with the weaker showing would step down and endorse the other. "Unfortunately, Barak did not agree," said Shahak.

A party spokesman said there were plans to open about 125 branches by election time, and that nearly 70 have been opened.

Danna Harman

Bishara, Mahameed split from Hadash-Balad

MKs Azmi Bishara and Hashem Mahameed split from the joint Hadash-Balad Knesset faction yesterday, and were recognized by the House Committee as Balad. The departure brings to 20 the number of factions in the Knesset, amid a wave of separations in advance of the elections.

The two MKs have signed a unity agreement between their two parties, Balad and National Unit, and intend to run independently, although the door has not been shut on unity with the joint Democratic Arab Party and Islamic Movement list.

Mahameed said the two were united in their distaste for the "heavy weight of the Communist Party in Hadash." He said they would form an outright Arab party, noting that "there is no such thing today as an Arab-Jewish party as Hadash claims."

Nina Gilbert

Meretz puts out its slogans

Meretz unveiled its slogan yesterday: "Meretz: To Be Free in Our Land." Like the other parties, Meretz tested its slogans in focus groups and among thousands of voters. The two sub-slogans are: "There is Hope and It Will Prevail," and "The Heart Beats on the Left."

Nina Gilbert



Center Party women - wives and candidates - pose during a campaign tour in Tel Aviv yesterday in honor of International Women's Day. Seen from left to right are MK candidate Dalia Rabin-Pelosooff, Kochi Mordechai, Tali Lipkin-Shahak, Elisheva Milo, and candidate Nehama Ronen.

Center Party women hit campaign trail

By Danna Harman

International Women's Day yesterday found the Center Party ladies out in full force, with both candidates and wives heading to Tel Aviv's Carmel Market to help get signatories for the party's platform on women. The troop worked a while - signing up, for example, Center Party leader Yitzhak Mordechai, who stopped by - and then turned to other activities.

Dalia Rabin-Pelosooff lit up a cigarette and chatted with some shopkeepers; Environmentalist Nehama Ronen turned down the Marlboros and opted for an ice coffee; Tali Lipkin-Shahak tried to persuade the group to relocate to Shenkin Street's trendy cafe Tamar; and the usually publicity shy Kochi Mordechai, Mordechai's wife, agreed to give a few impromptu interviews.

The Center Party's platform on women, meanwhile, - which was expected to be presented

formally yesterday - is not completed. Passersby were asked to sign on in support of a number of principles to be included in the platform. The principles, highlighted, were equality in work, salary, education, and political representation. Rabin-Pelosooff said the party's official platform on women was actually ready, but would be presented along with the rest of the platform in the near future.

Mordechai's wife dismissed

suggestions that she was being brought out to help her husband's campaign.

"I have come out today because this is an issue close to my heart," she said. "I don't intend to suddenly become a very public persona, and don't think my life has to change because of my husband's decision to run... but there are certainly some issues - such as equal rights for women, and the needs of students - that I plan to speak out about."

Naveh to coordinate PM's political activity

By Liat Collins and Danna Harman

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced last night that former cabinet secretary Dan Naveh will coordinate his personal political activities.

The announcement comes after a series of complaints to the Civil Service Commissioner's Office that civil servants in the Prime

Minister's Office are involved in party politics. The complaints have focused on Aviv Bushinsky, the prime minister's spokesman; Moshe Leon, the director-general of the Prime Minister's Office; and his personal secretary, Ruhama Avraham.

Civil Service Commissioner Shmuel Hollander is expected to shortly conclude the investigation into Avraham, who recently met

with Arthur Finkelstein, Netanyahu's American spin doctor. The legal adviser of the Prime Minister's Office said that not every meeting she has with Finkelstein is necessarily a violation of the Civil Service regulations.

Arieh Greenblat, a spokesman for Hollander, confirmed that Avraham is being investigated for possible infringements of the law forbidding civil servants from polit-

ical activity. He said that there have been several complaints against Avraham on this account.

Netanyahu told Army Radio that he finds it "impossible to completely separate political work from national activities at this stage."

What do my assistants have to do, he asked, "go out of the Prime Minister's Office to make a phone call having to do with the political agenda?"

Meanwhile, Eitan is traveling today to the Netherlands flower exhibition and is not expected to return until the weekend.

Molodet is apparently the only party still interested in Eitan.

Herut is still upset that Eitan held serious negotiations with the Likud, and noted that this could make him ideologically unacceptable to the group.

IT'S LOTTOMANIA

DRAW TODAY



NEWS

in brief

Artist ordered to pay NIS 50,000

Judge Yoav Avni of Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court ordered artist Uri Lipschitz yesterday to pay NIS 50,000 in compensatory damages to Zalman Winder, who is known as 'Zalman Shoshi,' for libel, over his call in an article published by *Ha'aretz* for society to rid itself of the war-wounded and homosexuals.

Lipschitz had failed to file a defense motion against the claim filed by Winder on October 20.

Winder said in response to the ruling that homosexuals were equal in the eyes of God and that Lipschitz deserved to be fined for his remarks. *Itm*

Two men sentenced for murder conspiracy

The Tel Aviv District Court yesterday sentenced Mussa Masrawe, 38, from Taiba and Nidal Hamida, 25, from Faroun, to life in prison for the premeditated murder of Hitam Masrawe.

After Hitam left her husband, Kadri Masrawe, Mussa hired Hamida to kill her. In November 1997, while Mussa was on pilgrimage in Mecca, Hamida shot Hitam twice as she arrived at work in the early morning.

Bilal Habib, from Faroun, who introduced Mussa and Hamida and assisted the latter in the murder, has already been convicted in a separate trial. *Itm*

Confessed wife beater gets community service

Beersheba Magistrate's Court Judge Hanna Slotki yesterday sentenced a man who confessed to repeatedly beating his wife, locking her in their bedroom and threatening to kill her if she went to the police to 300 hours of community service.

The judge reportedly decided against a stiffer sentence because the 27-year-old man has cooperated with the court, begun divorce proceedings and undergone therapy for stress-management.

The man has previously been found guilty in court of attacking police officers and illegal gambling. In neither of those cases did he receive a prison sentence. *Itm*

70% of minimum wage earners are women

More than 70 percent of minimum wage earners in the country are women, and the rate of unemployment among women is 30% higher than among men, according to a publication put out by the Women's Lobby in Israel for International Women's Day, which was yesterday.

The booklet entitled *Women in Israel: Facts and Figures - 1998*, also shows that the average wage for men is almost double that of the average for women - NIS 6,929, compared to NIS 3,729. *Itm*

Israeli teenage girls diet more than peers abroad

By JUDY SIEGEL

Women exercise less than men, but they also smoke less and drink less alcohol than their male counterparts. However, while men are more likely to suffer from heart disease, AIDS and asthma, women are more prone to cancers, mental illness and high blood pressure. These statistics were disclosed to mark International Women's Day, which was observed here and abroad yesterday.

In June, a statistical yearbook on women's health will be released by the Israel Women's Network, Hadassah-Israel and the Israel Center for Disease Control. According to the as-yet-unpublished material, the fertility rate among Israeli women is 2.9 children, which is significantly higher than in Europe and North Africa. Women's average life expectancy is 79.9 years - very high, but only 3.6 years longer than men's.

Jewish women live longer, on average, than Arab women. Women tend to visit the doctor 30% more frequently than men. In 1998, 46% of women aged 50 to 75 underwent a mammography during the previous two years, compared to only 34% in 1995. Women aged 35 to 44 are most likely to smoke - 29% of them do.

Kupat Holim Clalit has declared March as "Women's Health Month," during which it will try to increase women's awareness of their health needs and encourage them to take a greater role in ensuring their own good health. Free lectures, open to members of the four health

funds, will be held this month around the country.

Clalit operates 31 women's health centers and will open a center to prevent, diagnose and treat breast cancer at Beersheba's Soroka Hospital next week. The center, named in memory of the late Elisheva Kaplan Eshkol (first wife of the late prime minister Levi Eshkol), has the most advanced mammography and ultrasound equipment and 450 square meters of clinic, treatment and lecture space. Three conferences on women's health are being held at the Beersheba Hilton this week to mark the opening of the facility.

A Clalit survey also found that the average woman assesses her health to be poorer than men do, and she's more likely to be worn out by work. Israeli teenage girls go on diets and watch TV more frequently than most of their counterparts abroad.

Meanwhile, a Bezeq telecard has been issued in honor of International Women's Day. The phone card shows a variety of women representing their professions, with the title: "Women Succeed. No Less."

A quarter of Bezeq's executives and a third of its board members are women, as are one-third of its total number of employees. Women also constitute 22% of their engineers and 64% of their academically trained workers. Eighteen percent of its women employees are college graduates compared to 16% of its male employees.

The Postal Authority has also issued a special postal cancellation to mark International Women's Day.

Politics a touchy subject at Knesset Women's Day session

By NINA GILBERT

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu was the odd man out yesterday at a session in the Knesset to mark International Women's Day. But lucky for him, as soon as he concluded his speech he got out - and missed being in the line of fire during the ensuing uproar ignited by Labor MK Yael Dayan.

MK Marina Solodkin (Yisrael Ba'aliya), chairman of the Committee for the Status of Women, had opened the session by calling on the participants to refrain from engaging in election propaganda.

However, no one heeded the call, starting with Netanyahu.

"There is a wide consensus that many activities were carried out by women and men in the Knesset and governments, and I must say my government, to bring about a change in the status of women in Israel. This was expressed in the results of the primaries in the main parties," the prime minister said.

"I wish the day will come that we don't need this day for the status of women, or maybe the day will come when we need men's day. I hope we will arrive at absolute equality between the sexes," Netanyahu said.

Netanyahu also boasted that in an unusual step as prime minister, one of the few laws he had introduced in the Knesset was setting a minimum punishment for crimes of violence against women.

Touching a theme of Labor Party leader Ehud Barak, Netanyahu also noted that a priority should be better women's health care and special women's units in hospitals. He noted that Jerusalem's Shaare Zedek Hospital had recently opened a special women's health unit, and said he believed the idea would soon spread to many other hospitals around the country.

However, Dayan said afterwards that women's health had only deteriorated under the Netanyahu government. Last week, she said, the government refused to include a medication for osteoporosis in the health basket, and in vitro treat-



Knesset candidate Pnina Rosenbloom makes a point to participants at the Knesset session of International Women's Day yesterday. (Itan Hersh)

ments have also been reduced. She also noted that many other hospitals have similar women's units, which she said were built by donations from foreigners and not due to government efforts.

Netanyahu wasn't scheduled to attend, and his participation was only announced in the morning. After early elections were declared, Netanyahu appeared unexpectedly in a similar fashion before a gathering of senior citizens, where he announced a change in policy to refrain from harming them.

Dayan took to the podium first after Netanyahu departed, declaring that "he wasn't scheduled to be here." She said Netanyahu "spoke in high-flattened tones that maybe

one day we won't need this day. But he knows well that as regards the rights and the budgets we have and all that relates to the status of women, will need this day for many more years." Her comments caused women from the Right to come to Netanyahu's defense and they began a shouting match with Dayan. "You're distorting the prime minister's speech," said Sima Ramati.

In support of Dayan, one of the women activists shouted: "The prime minister has made a 'snatch' of our event," Dayan responded: "I am from another party, I am in the opposition, and I want him to be replaced, and there is nothing that can't be said at a political gathering."

We are political women. No one is going to shut anyone's mouth." Only the mention of the presence of the Four Mothers, who are pushing for the IDF to leave Lebanon, unified the women into applause.

Dayan also condemned the prime minister's mention of violence against women. "This is a day about women's rights. It is not a women's right to be beaten and it is not an issue only of women but a social problem," Pnina Rosenbloom, heading a party in her own name, tried to calm tempers, and asked if the women "could unite together and hold a cultured event." Among those who attended the session Center Party candidates Dalia Rabin-Pelosoff and Nehama

Ronen, Esther Herzog and Ofra Meiron of the Women's Rights party, Naomi Chazan of Meretz, and the Likud's Gila Gamliel.

Herzog, who heads the Yitzug Shaveh women's party, said that the women had nothing to be proud of in increasing the number of women MKs by one or two, noting that representation had only regressed over the years. "It is a disgrace. Egypt is more advanced than us in that respect."

Women are used as a fig leaf by parties," she said.

Chazan said that the women MKs had been hampered in their efforts by coming up against the brick wall of men. She also noted that Meretz's list is 40 percent women.



Family values

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and wife Sara cuddle a baby in the nursery of Jerusalem's Hadassah-University Hospital, Ein Kerem, and Navah and Ehud Barak comfort a child at a battered women's shelter in Tel Aviv yesterday during visits honoring International Women's Day. (Avi Hayon, Israel Sim)



Blumenthal elected World Likud head

By LIAT COLLINS

MK Naomi Blumenthal was elected by a large majority last night as head of World Likud. Some 300 World Likud members participated, half of them from the Diaspora and half from Israel. The vote was between Blumenthal and MK Ze'ev Boim. Blumenthal won by 209 to 78 votes.

The previous holder of the posi-

tion, Zalman Shoval, was chosen as a compromise between the rival Avigdor Lieberman camp and Dan Meridor-Ronni Milo camp in the Likud at the time. The tension focused then on appointments in the Jewish Agency and Jewish National Fund.

The post has been open for some nine months since Shoval was appointed ambassador to the U.S. Although Blumenthal and Boim could be seen to represent different groups within the Likud, the elections yesterday lacked the tension of previous years.

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu had reportedly tried to persuade Blumenthal not to compete, in order to avoid any possible conflict within the party. Blumenthal, convinced she would win, refused his request.

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Row over fees for Independence Day shows

By HEIDI J. GLEIT

This year's Independence Day celebrations are going to feature local choirs and dance troupes instead of big stars—if the Union of Local Authorities and the entertainers' unions don't come to an agreement soon.

The entertainers claim that the ULA unilaterally decided to cut the amount it will pay them to appear at local celebrations in half and refuses to discuss the issue with them. If they don't accept the new prices, the municipalities will just find alternative entertainment, they say.

ULA spokesman Hilik Goldstein claims that the entertainers demanded extraordinarily high prices at three meetings with ULA officials and refused to put forward serious proposals. At a time when municipalities are having difficulty paying for regular expenses, they can't afford to pay NIS 50,000 for a half-hour performance.

According to a list Goldstein prepared, Rita demanded NIS 155,000, Gidi Gov NIS 110,000, and Aviv Gefen NIS 100,000 to perform for half an hour on Independence Day last year. Other singers demanded between NIS 30,000 and NIS 60,000, while comedians demanded NIS 40,000 to serve as emcees.

The performers don't see most of this money, singer Hanan Yovel said yesterday at a press conference the entertainers' unions called in Tel Aviv. They pay out between 70 percent and 80 percent for equipment—including setting up the stage—and support staff, such as agents, drivers, and sound technicians.

While the performance may only last 30 minutes, Israeli Artists Union head Dudu Dotan said, the performers spend hours developing and practicing each song they perform.

Goldstein said the performers had reversed the figure and that they actually pocket 70%-80% of the prices he cited.

At the press conference, where performers outnumbered reporters, the performers demanded that the municipalities just give them an opportunity to work for fair wages.

"There are 2,500 performers in Israel, and they deserve the opportunity to work," Dotan said. "Many artists live under the poverty line."

Eurovision plans unveiled

By HEIDI J. GLEIT

They might have had a little bit of trouble getting one of the microphones to work at its first press conference in Tel Aviv yesterday, but the team organizing Eurovision '99 was confident it won't have any such problems on May 29.

The \$7 million song contest will be broadcast live that night—two days before the second round of elections and several weeks after the Palestinians may declare a state—from the Jerusalem International Convention Center to television across Israel and Europe.

The organizers estimate that 100 million people in 30 countries will watch representatives of 23 countries compete for the honor of producing the best pop song.

Eurovision '99 is an opportunity for Israel to demonstrate how far it has come in the past 50 years, Israel Broadcasting Authority

director-general Uri Porat said. There are still a few details to work out though, such as finding sponsors to shell out another \$500,000 and selecting emcees for the three-hour long extravaganza, executive producer Amnon Barkai acknowledged.

They are negotiating with several candidates, but not Dana International, who brought the contest to Israel by winning first place last year with her song "Diva." Instead, she will star in a seven-minute video that will be played before the results are announced.

This year Eden will represent Israel with "Happy Birthday." The other participants are to select their representatives by May 15.

The performers are scheduled to arrive in Jerusalem a week before the contest.

In addition to rehearsals, a series of receptions and events has been scheduled for that week with the help of the Jerusalem Municipality and the Tourism Ministry.



The official official logo for Eurovision '99, which was unveiled at yesterday's press conference. (Reuters)

Synagogue in Siberia desecrated; Russian police downplay importance

NOVOSIBIRSK, Russia (AP)—A newly rededicated synagogue in Siberia was vandalized, with Torahs thrown on the floor and swastikas and antisemitic writings scrawled on the walls and ceilings, Jewish leaders and police said yesterday.

However, police downplayed the seriousness of the attack, with an investigator describing it as "kids having hijinks."

Jews in Novosibirsk received the synagogue back from local authorities about a year ago, and a rabbi arrived from Israel 10 days ago to

help the community get back on its feet, according to Rabbi Berel Lazar, who leads Habad in Russia.

"It was the first time in many years they had a rabbi there. They just celebrated Purim and had an incredible turnout, about 1,000 people," he said in Moscow.

Police investigator Alexander Osintsev said vandals covered the walls and ceilings of the synagogue with swastikas and the letters RNE—an acronym designating an increasingly vocal neo-Nazi movement, Russian National Unity.

But nobody claimed responsibility

for the attack that occurred Sunday night or early yesterday morning.

Police said they aren't sure whether they will open a criminal case.

"Nothing terrible happened here," Osintsev said. "We've had much more serious incidents today, such as a murder and a robbery. And this is just some kids having hijinks."

Expressions of antisemitism and desecrations of Jewish cemeteries and synagogues have become increasingly frequent in Russia in

recent years.

Two Communist lawmakers have been making virulent antisemitic statements, and despite strong international pressure, the party only grudgingly issued a vague denunciation of their comments.

Before yesterday, Siberia had been "the one place that's been fairly quiet," Lazar said.

Lazar said the attack is the worst since a bomb exploded near a Habad synagogue in Moscow last May, badly damaging the building and injuring two people.

PA officials say no to trance party in Jericho

The Palestinian Authority may have legalized casino gambling, but yesterday it drew the line at hosting a trance party for young Israelis in Jericho.

Trance involves the dancers whirling to the sound of thumping music, often in nature reserves. The trancers say the express their yearning for peace, but police say drug use is rampant and routinely break up the

parties. Newspapers said yesterday that organizers of a trance party had won permission to hold a three-day celebration in Jericho at the start of April.

However, Jericho municipal spokesman Saad Sweiti said the town wanted no part of the festivities.

The trance party organizer, Eyal Barkan, insisted he had all

the necessary permits to hold the event in Jericho under the title, "Give peace a chance." Barkan said he saw no problem with the party being held in the conservative Palestinian areas.

"Arafat will dance there," said Barkan jokingly, referring to PA Chairman Yasser Arafat.

The Peres Center for Peace withdrew its backing for the event yesterday, saying it had

been presented by the organizers as a folklore festival, not a trance party.

Trance parties were first held in Israel about 10 years ago, when large groups of army veterans began traveling to beach resorts in India.

After returning, many tried to recreate the experience by organizing all-night, outdoor dance parties. (AP)

NEWS

in brief

Number of children in poverty rises

The number of children living beneath the poverty line has more than doubled in the last 15 years, according to Prof. Yitzhak Kashui of Tel Aviv University's education department.

In 1996, 21.4 percent of the country's children were living in poverty, taking into account welfare payments and tax breaks, he said in a lecture Sunday.

Kashui said the only way to fight the growing poverty is to make education more accessible, particularly enabling more youngsters to get a higher education. *Jerusalem Post Staff*

Blood drive for hemophiliacs

A Magen David Adom campaign collecting blood for hemophiliacs patients opened this week and is to run until the end of March. There are about 350 hemophiliacs in the country, all boys and men who inherited the disease.

Their condition is eased by infusions of Factor 8, produced from blood plasma. Some 12 million units of Factor 8 are needed each year for treating hemorrhages.

Donors may call 1-800-400-101 for information on when and where donations are accepted. *Judy Siegel*

National institute offers health care study grants

The National Institute for Health Policy Research at Sheba Hospital yesterday invited researchers in the field of health and social sciences with at least a master's degree to apply for grants to carry out studies on the quality and economics of health care in Israel.

As the body designated by the 1995 National Health Insurance Law to promote such research, the institute yesterday issued its first volume of 28 studies carried out in the past two years. Grants of up to NIS 250,000 will be allocated, and 65 studies are being researched.

The institute includes representatives of the Health Ministry, the health funds, universities, National Insurance Institute and the Central Bureau of Statistics. *Judy Siegel*

Center will help disabled to use computers

A NIS 2 million center to promote computer use among the seriously disabled was dedicated in Tel Aviv yesterday by the main donor, philanthropist Ian Carten of England, and President Ezer Weizman.

The center has special facilities to meet the needs of severely handicapped people and help them to become integrated into the workforce.

The center will be used for vocational assessment and training, as well as for leisure time activities. Disabled people who are already working will be able to depend on the center for technical support. *Judy Siegel*

Hula Valley crane lands in Damascus

Drora, a female crane who was caught in the Hula Valley two months ago and fitted with a transmitter, landed yesterday morning near Damascus.

In recent weeks, she has been in the Negev and western Sinai. According to Dan Alon of the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel's Ornithology Center, this is a sign that the birds are beginning to migrate back to Europe for the summer.

Drora is one of three cranes SPNI fitted with transmitters in an international research project.

She is the only one who did not stay in the Hula area. *Liat Collins*



Barry A.J. Fisher, visiting director of the Scientific Services Bureau of the Los Angeles Police, says fingerprints are the tip of the iceberg of forensic medicine today. (Ariel Jerolimski/Jerusalem Post)

US forensic expert lectures Israel Police

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

Unlike television detective shows in which the evidence is collected and processed within an hour including commercial breaks, real life forensic science is much more painstaking and exact, according to Barry A.J. Fisher, director of the Scientific Service Bureau for the Los Angeles county and President of the International Association of Forensic Sciences.

Fisher is here mixing business with pleasure, lecturing police, talking with scientists at the Weizmann Institute and Hebrew University and visiting his son who is studying at a yeshiva.

Tomorrow he will travel to Jordan to meet with the deputy director of the Institute of Forensic Medicine there.

The National Police Division of ID and Forensic Science which is hosting Fisher has a

staff of some 180 people and includes laboratories for weapon identification, documents, chemistry, and biology divisions, arson investigations, drugs, trace evidence, mobile crime laboratories and psychological services that include an album of rogues, photos of known criminals, identikit of suspects, voice prints and more.

Fisher has worked in the Los Angeles Forensic science department for some 30 years, working in most areas - narcotics, alcohol, drunken driving, homicide, blood typing and trace evidence.

"Traditionally the function of forensic science is to assist police in their investigations. We take an independent look at the evidence based on scientific means and come up with an independent conclusion," he says.

Technology such as DNA

testing help forensic scientists to do things that they once could only dream about he says. Today, DNA samples can be taken off the saliva of a postage stamp. A couple of months ago he says a report was published on how scientists were able to get DNA samples off fingerprints.

"There is enough genetic material there to actually identify a person in addition to the fingerprints left at a scene by using DNA processing," he said.

DNA testing, he says, is just the tip of the iceberg. The US military he says is in the midst of developing a procedure that will enable it to conduct analyses in the field.

Using a laboratory chip, samples are smeared on a 35 mm. slide and inserted into a special device.

He realizes civil rights groups

are wary of such technologies. "For every positive thing there is always a potential for misuse," he notes.

Fisher's department handles 60 percent of the Los Angeles area, the rest is handled by the Los Angeles Police Department. Most cases deal with drugs and the department handles some 30,000 cases a year.

Israel, he says, is perceived by many to be a dangerous place, but "Israel's murder rate is approximately 150 a year including terrorism," says Levinson.

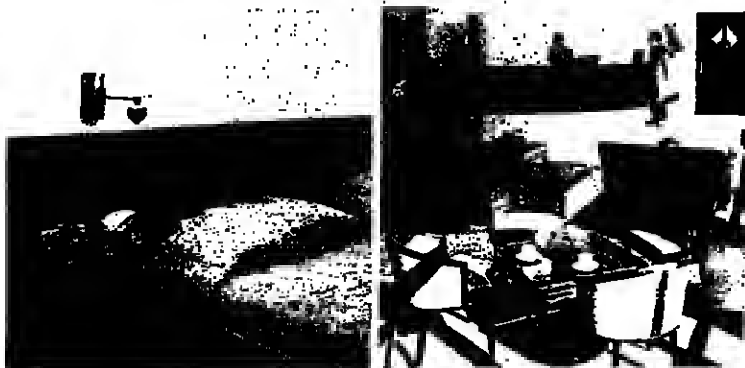
"We hear you tenfold," says Fisher.

Israeli forensics says Fisher, are respected enough to make Israel a contender for the International Association of Forensic Science convention slated to be held in 2002, alongside China, France and Australia.

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The banana split

Did you know that the Concise Oxford Dictionary of Quotations carries not one indexed reference to the word banana? This is shocking, and something should be done about it — columnists cannot work under these conditions.

Surely someone must have coined banana republic, banana-skin politics, bent as a banana? The lapse does, however, give British Prime Minister Tony Blair a shot at immortality, if he's quick enough to seize the moment and coin some snappy quote apropos the Great Banana War.

In the past week we have seen astonishing scenes in London. There was Blair fuming at the government of his great buddy, Bill Clinton. Philip Lader, the American ambassador, was summoned, for the first time in living memory, to be carried by the British government — as if he were the envoy of some errant ... well, banana republic.

"Bananas are funny, somehow," says the current *Economist*, but it adds that this banana war between the United States and the European Union is not in the least funny. Even if it is in the end defused by negotiation, the banana trade war shows something more serious rumbling in our already fragmenting and confused new world order.

Size counts

Washington is being fiercely attacked on this issue by London, Brussels, Paris, and Tokyo and there are other issues of irritation, most of which point increasingly to a certain overbearing arrogance in a certain "only remaining superpower" that thinks size is everything.

Some basic facts in the story so far — the US charges the European Union with giving unfair preference to bananas from former European colonies, at the expense of US firms exporting bananas from the dollar economies of Central and South America. Last week Washington imposed a 100 percent tariff on a select range of European luxury goods.

These disputes are meant to be solved by the powerful World Trade Organization, and indeed the WTO is due to rule on the banana war in a couple of weeks. It probably will find in favor of the US view any way, and impose some fines on the EU states, but the United States jumped the gun and imposed the tariffs unilaterally — hitting its best friend, Britain, the hardest. Exporters' losses are immediate because Washington ordered them to cover the future cost by lodging bonds with US Customs. Many manufacturers will find it simply too risky to continue shipping sanctioned goods into the United States.

Mere sweaters

Sir Leon Brittan, the Brussels trade commissioner, minced no words in accusing the Americans of riding rough-shod over WTO rules. "The Americans are heedless of the damage inflicted on the jobs and prosperity of people who have nothing whatsoever to do with bananas."

Washington seemed to assume that imposing its sanctions on \$550 million of such esoteric

European goods as cashmere sweaters, luxury bath oils, Louis Vuitton handbags, Parma ham and pecorino cheese would pass off with some minor grumbles. It's not exactly the sort of stuff lapped up by its domestic buyers of all-American mall trash.

Americans are not the most adept at grasping what's important to peoples other than their self-obsessed selves. The administration failed to anticipate the revulsion felt in Britain when television ran a story on a proud Scottish community that makes fine cashmere sweaters, and now faces ruin because 1997 tariffs will wipe out its export market at a stroke.

Also, Scotland is in an election campaign for its first autonomous assembly, so the American action has put Blair's New Labour Party in an awkward position in its battle with separatist Scottish nationalists. A fuming British trade minister informed the House of Commons that "irrational and unacceptable" American behavior threatened to wipe out the \$30 million Scottish cashmere export industry, making its skilled craftspeople innocent victims of the banana republic — or, more accurately, American fruit barons.

It's you Sam

Scotland's leading trades union leader Bill Spiers, was even more blunt. "So much for the special relationship," he said with heavy sarcasm. "This is an outrage perpetrated by one of the most protectionist states in the world to advance the interests of giant American fruit companies."

Yes indeed, there's the head of the nail, that good old-fashioned American hypocrisy seen so blatantly in the relentless pursuit of Clinton by a partisan Congress, and now practiced by the administration's own trade officials.

Europe's capital Brussels is lobbied by Caribbean states whose banana exports can reach 60-70% of their national income. They plead for more time to diversify their industries, and this is the basis of the preference they have been accorded, admittedly now in breach of WTO rules.

It would be nice if the Americans in turn could acknowledge their own monumental self-interest and the power of the fruit lobby. It would be nice to hear the dispute is about the profits of these huge corporations who market Third World bananas, not about concern for the Third World producers.

The history of the American banana companies in Central America is one of blood, banditry and exploitation, before which most former European colonialism pales. Between the 1890s and the 1950s the exploits of US 'banana barons' became unsavory legends across the Central American isthmus, as did the later supporting interference of the CIA in bolstering its pliable fascist dictatorships.

Now the Christian moral imperatives of WTO trade rules are suddenly paramount? Pull the other one, Uncle Sam! Let's hear more about a rising tide of American resentment against an alarmingly successful and ambitious European Union.

Troubled times for the CBC

The formerly dominant Canadian broadcasting network tries to find its place in a 100-channel world

By STEVEN PEARLSTEIN

Not long ago, it might have been said that a Canadian was someone who tuned in the CBC. Its French-language soap operas virtually cleared the streets of Montreal, its newsroom largely set the country's political agenda.

Families on remote farms and in Arctic igloos turned to it for friendly, familiar voices at supper time. For much of the country, Saturday night revolved around its hockey double-headers.

A bastion of Canadian culture at a time when fear of creeping American influence is running high, its prime-time programming is 90 percent home-grown.

But these are less heady days for the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. The president of the government-owned corporation has just been eased out by the prime minister, as has the head of its English-language television division. And like other broadcasters, the CBC is slowly losing its audience to scores of new specialty channels on radio and TV.

On top of that, the union representing its 3,000 journalists voted Friday, by a margin of nearly 5 to 1, to join a strike by 2,800 technicians already in progress. By early next week, the network could be effectively shut down for the first time in its history.

"My morale right now is in the dumpster," said Hana Gartner, the normally feisty host of the network's nightly magazine show. "I'm worried. I don't like the way this play is unfolding."

A key behind-the-scenes role in the drama is being played by Prime Minister Jean Chretien, whose long-standing animosity toward the network stems from unflattering coverage he has received from its news staff, and a perception that the French-language arm of the network is blatantly sympathetic to the separatist movement in Quebec.

Chretien cut the CBC's subsidy by 30% in the mid-1990s, and last year he introduced legislation to have the president of the CBC serve at the pleasure of the government rather than, as under current law, for a fixed term (the proposal was later dropped). More recently, his public complaint about aggressive CBC coverage of a controversy involving the prime minister's office and the



Prime Minister Jean Chretien's (seen here with his wife) long-standing animosity toward the CBC stems from unflattering coverage he has received from its news staff. (AP)

Royal Canadian Mounted Police led to the suspension of the reporter on the story.

Americans know the CBC by some of the successful limitations it has spawned.

Long before CBS launched *60 Minutes*, the CBC's *This Hour Has Seven Days* was producing hard-hitting journalism that attracted 60-70% audience shares. And National Public Radio's flagship *All Things Considered* was a direct im-

itation of CBC Radio's *As It Happens*.

TO some degree, the CBC's current predicament was inevitable.

The network was created in the 1930s in an effort to stitch together a sprawling, sparsely populated country that spanned six time zones and spoke three languages, and whose citizenry identified more closely with its provinces than with the federal government in Ottawa.

With few private alternatives, the CBC believed its mission was to try to be all things to all people — a Canadian ABC, PBS, NPR and CNN rolled into one. By the late 1980s, the government was pumping in the equivalent of \$1 billion a year into the network.

But in recent years, the urgency of that mission has been eroded, particularly in television. Canadians began to flock to US television, either beamed across the border or

picked up by Canada's cable systems and private broadcasters. Two rival broadcast networks emerged in English-speaking Canada and another in French-speaking Quebec, and there is a burgeoning number of Canadian cable channels catering to narrower interests.

As a result, the CBC now attracts less than 10% of English-speaking viewers and 20% among French speakers.

Despite these dramatic shifts — and the accompanying cuts in its government funding — the CBC has been reluctant to give up any part of its mission. Instead, it has tried to survive by continually trimming budgets, doubling up on assignments and outsourcing work to private firms.

Local news coverage has been cut sharply, and last month it was announced that three more foreign bureaus — in Paris, Mexico City and Cape Town, South Africa — would be closed. Last week, the network announced that production would be canceled on a much-touted television movie, *It Must Be Santa*, despite investment of nearly \$3 million in set-up costs.

At the same time, more emphasis has been put on developing programs that will attract advertising dollars, which now account for 50% of English-language television revenue.

According to many present and former CBC executives, these efforts may have got the network through a series of budget crises, but they distracted it from developing a sustainable role for itself in the 100-channel world.

And over the long run, some say, they may have eroded public support by making CBC television less daring and less distinctive.

"Meeting the exacting demands of a commercial marketplace forces you into a ratings game, which really isn't consistent with the CBC's public policy mandate — or with the kind of cutting-edge programming that the CBC was once famous for," said Ivan Fecan, now the head of the rival CTV network, who spent decades at the CBC as a radio and television producer.

"CBC can be the centerpiece of Canadian television by concentrating on doing the things that can't and won't be done by private television." (The Washington Post)

Poland belatedly confronts its Communist past

By PETER FINN

Nearly 30 years ago, Janusz Godyn took a job as an investigative officer with the border police of the Polish People's Republic. This week, he paid for that choice with a public humiliation.

Now 49 and president of the Polish Supreme Court's military chamber, Godyn saw his name on a published list of 25 Poles who have admitted to some collaboration with the former Communist secret services. More names are expected to be listed in *Monitor Polski*, the official government newsletter, in the coming months.

Ten years after the fall of communism, and years after the example was set by other East European countries, Poland is belatedly settling accounts with its communist past. But the country's delay in seeking a reckoning with party functionaries and alleged collabo-

rators, and the relatively mild sanctions for those who admit to collusion with the secret police and intelligence services, illustrate the agonized uncertainty that marks this country's debate over retribution.

"There is a point of view that the responsibility for communism in Poland lay not only in the high levels of the Communist Party but also among a majority of people in society who were passive," said Andrzej Paczkowski, a historian and adviser to a parliamentary committee drafting legislation to create a National Remembrance Institute, where secret police files would be housed.

"Where is the clear border between those who were responsible and those who were innocent?"

Yet in the absence of a formal and fair mechanism for vetting individuals' pasts, Polish politics repeatedly has been scarred by unsubstantiated accusations that

public servants were informers.

In 1992 — in what was known as the Night of the Long Files — the interior minister of the Solidarity government supplied Parliament with the names of prominent politicians who allegedly were secret police stool pigeons.

Most of those named were the interior minister's rivals within Solidarity, and what was seen as naked power politics within the party damaged the very idea of confronting the past.

In 1996 prime minister Jozef Oleksy was forced to resign when he was accused of being a KGB agent — a charge he denied and one that still has not been proven conclusively. "The past poisoned public life because accusations of collaboration became an instrument of political struggle and nobody could verify whether something was true or not," said Edmund Wnuk-Lipinski, a professor of sociology at the Institute of Political Studies here.

"The Polish public is a little tired of this problem."

Since 1989, the past repeatedly has been used here as a political bludgeon, and the ritualistic, often unscrupulous, condemnations demanded a legislative fix.

Last year, a series of laws was proposed. One draconian measure, which echoed the Czech de-communization model, died quickly.

A second bill, which creates a National Remembrance Institute to allow individuals access to their secret police files, was vetoed by Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski, a junior minister in Poland's last Communist government.

The bill, as drafted, allows "victims" access and would prevent former apparatchiks and informers from seeing their files. Kwasniewski argued the files should be open to everyone so alleged informers could challenge false accusations. Parliament last Friday approved a compromise mea-

sure. Another new law forces 22,500 people, including the president, MPs and senior civil servants, to state whether they worked for security agencies or collaborated with them.

Three hundred people, including Godyn, have admitted that they did, and their names gradually are being published. The statements of the 22,500 who "denied" any involvement with Communist security services are supposed to be scrutinized in a process that some fear could take years.

Under the new law, anyone who tells the truth cannot be fired, but they can be demoted, and on Wednesday the justice minister demoted three senior prosecutors whose names appeared on the list.

The Supreme Court head said he will stick by Godyn, arguing it is ridiculous for border guards to be equated with secret police. Godyn, whose exact admissions are secret, declined to be interviewed. (The Washington Post)

On-line romance leads to transatlantic cybersuicide

By JON JETER

That their romance defied distance and logic did not seem to matter to Julie Yasa. She lived in Paris; he, outside Detroit. She was lonely; he was on-line.

His flirtations appeared to her in the middle of the night, words brightening a dark computer screen and her melancholy heart, fastening to something inside her. Photographs were exchanged. Finally, after eight months of exchanges, they agreed: a tryst.

She arrived in Detroit at the end of February, looking for love. What

she found was a one-night stand. They consummated their cyber-space affair at her paramour's apartment, and afterward he dropped her off at a Motel 6, heartbroken and alone. When she reappeared on his doorstep three days later threatening suicide, he wanted no part of her. He handed her a bedsheet to ward off the March chill, then drove her to the edge of his apartment complex and put her out.

"You're not going to commit suicide in my place," he told the woman, according to police. He watched as Yasa walked off toward the thicket behind his suburban

home. Police found Yasa's slightly bruised body Wednesday, lying face down in the frigid woods where she was left to wander. She had only a credit card and \$27 in her pockets. A bedsheet was wrapped around her legs. Three pills lay beside her and police suspect the woman made good on her threats to kill herself.

Authorities continue to investigate Yasa's death and whether her lover played a criminal role in her apparent suicide.

Chances are, police say, that her suitor is a cad, but no criminal. Much as they would like to prosecute him for boorishness, they say,

they can only bring charges if they discover that he played a direct role in her suicide.

"He's a very cold-blooded person," said William Dwyer, chief of police in Farmington Hills, a middle-class suburb just north of Detroit. "It's a very cruel and callous person that can look someone in the eye like this, do what he did, and just not give a hoot."

THE courtship and death of a young, troubled woman is as ancient as any Greek tragedy but also a course and cautionary tale on the dangers of romance in the age of

e-mail.

Yasa's lover, whom police have not identified, knew she had a history of depression and mental illness and yet financed her trip to the US, Dwyer said.

When immigration officials in New York thwarted her first attempt to enter the country, the man arranged for a smuggler to help her enter through Canada. And when she got to Detroit, he refused to help or love her.

Yasa's body was discovered after the man called police dispatchers Wednesday, pretending to be a passerby who stumbled onto a body

in the woods. In the 911 recording, the man described spotting the body from a distance, then explained: "I didn't want to get too close."

Their courtship began in August, police said. He was 24, a recent college graduate between jobs in the computer industry. She had been treated for depression in France, Dwyer said.

Yasa flew from Paris to New York on February 5, but was not allowed to enter the US. The reason US immigration agents denied her entry was unclear. Officials at the French consulate in Chicago said she was a French citizen and had a valid passport.

She returned home to France, and her suitor helped pay for another flight, this time to Toronto. She arrived in the Canadian border town of Windsor on Valentine's Day.

Dwyer said that authorities in Windsor noted Yasa acting strangely and tried, unsuccessfully, to have her committed to a psychiatric ward there. Yasa's paramour in the Detroit area told police that he paid a man to smuggle Yasa into the city, Dwyer said.

AFTER having sex, the man took her to a hotel and left. An employee at the hotel told the *Detroit News* that Yasa paid for her stay in advance and with cash but staff had little reason to notice her.

Distraught, she showed up on her lover's doorstep last Tuesday, wearing only black jeans and a white blouse and saying she had swal-

lowed a bottle of pills, Dwyer said. The man refused to let her inside the apartment, handed her a bedsheet, then coaxed her inside his car. She continued her threats inside the car, but the man put her out near the end of the driveway leading to his apartment building.

He phoned police nearly 24 hours later, providing police with no hint that he knew the woman or how she got there.

"I was driving by and saw it in the woods," he told dispatchers.

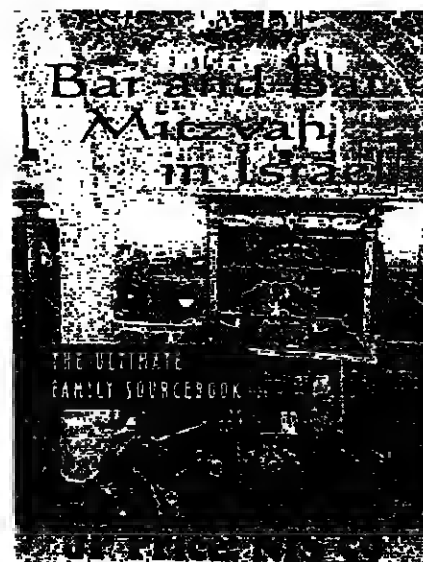
But police became suspicious when a neighbor told officers that she saw a man walking out of the wooded area where Yasa's body was found. The neighbor's description resembled that of Yasa's lover, and the sighting was five hours before he placed the phone call to 911, Dwyer said.

The blue pills recovered near Yasa's body matched those found outside the man's apartment, as well, although Dwyer said that authorities were uncertain if she actually took the drugs.

Yasa's body was slightly bruised but showed no signs of trauma, Dwyer said. Police are awaiting the results of a toxicology test before determining the cause of death.

Jalil Oussar, director of general affairs for the French Consulate in Chicago, said that the family had been notified of Yasa's death and is making arrangements to have her body returned to France.

"They are devastated by this," he said. (The Washington Post)



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ספריה מן הארץ

US: KLA approves Kosovo peace deal

PRISTINA, Serbia (Reuters) - Kosovo Liberation Army leaders have agreed to the terms of a peace deal negotiated at talks in France last month and have authorized its signature, a spokesman for US envoy Chris Hill said last night.

The KLA General Staff has asked Ambassador Hill to convey to (US) Secretary of State (Madeleine) Albright that it has approved the Rambouillet accords and authorized their signing, Phil Reeker, Hill's spokesman told Reuters.

But spokesman James Rubin remained sceptical, telling reporters: "What we need to do is get maximum clarity from the Kosovo Albanian side... I think I will conclude that the agreement is signed when it's been signed." Rubin said that US Kosovo mediator Chris Hill, after talks with the KLA, reported that the KLA general staff "asked him to tell Secretary (of State Madeleine) Albright that they have

approved the agreement as negotiated at Rambouillet and that they have authorized its signature." The United States expected the "ethnic Albanians, who make up 90 percent of the Yugoslav province of Kosovo, to sign the peace deal in Rambouillet, France, last month. Since then, other predictions that they would sign have proved premature.

Rubin said "there is a possibility" that US envoy Richard Holbrooke would go to Belgrade soon to put pressure on Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, whose support is also needed for a peace deal. But first "maximum clarity" with a signature on the peace accord was needed from the ethnic Albanian side, he said.

Other US officials told Reuters Holbrooke was certain to visit Belgrade this week as a last recourse to get Milosevic on board with a peace deal and obviate the need for NATO air strikes.

Reeker spoke by telephone after Hill spent more than six hours meeting KLA leaders at a safe house in the center of the Serbian province of Kosovo.

He was guarded in his reaction to the KLA announcement, making it clear the US government viewed the actual signing of the peace deal by the KLA, not a promise to put pen to paper, as the key to the matter.

"We've been into this process for a year," said Reeker. "There have been some false steps and frustrations so let's just see what happens."

The breakthrough came as a surprise after earlier reports that the separatist force had raised new objections to the deal. Reeker said the KLA leaders had faced logistical problems coming together in the Serb-run province to consult each other.

Meanwhile, fighting raged yesterday along the Macedonian border and in the

capital Belgrade. Earlier in the day, Milosevic shrugged off the threat of NATO airstrikes and stood firm in his opposition to any foreign troops to police the proposed Kosovo settlement. German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer made little headway in persuading Milosevic to agree to foreign troops in the province.

"We encountered an opinion in Belgrade that a political agreement is possible without military implementation," Fischer said. "This is a fatal mistake" by Milosevic.

Later, Fischer, along with van den Broek and the European Union's Kosovo envoy, Wolfgang Petritsch, flew to Pristina for meetings with ethnic Albanian moderate politicians who have agreed to sign the plan if they rebels are on board.

"It would be an historical mistake and I repeat, an historical mistake, if the KLA wouldn't sign," Fischer said.

WORLD

in brief

Kurdish party allowed to run in Turkey

ANKARA (AP) - Turkey's highest court yesterday rejected a prosecutor's attempt to bar a Kurdish party from running candidates in April 18 local and national elections, the Anadolu news agency reported. The constitutional court is currently hearing arguments in a case to ban the Kurdish party, called People's Democracy (HADEP) Party. The chief prosecutor, Vural Savas, had argued that HADEF candidates could not run because of the ongoing case. HADEF faces closure if the court rules that it is linked to Abdullah Ocalan's Kurdistan Workers Party or PKK. The PKK has been waging a 15-year war for autonomy in Turkey's southeast. The party was seen to have strong chances in the Kurdish-dominated southeast - particularly in mayoral elections. Turks will vote both in national and local elections on April 18.

Estonia sees preliminary election result Wed.

TALLINN (Reuters) - The Estonian electoral commission said yesterday that it does not expect to release definitive preliminary election results until tomorrow, though it expects no changes to the current seat allocations.

A commission official said that votes were still being counted this morning, "though totals will probably only change by tens, and nothing that should change the outcome" of yesterday's general election. Former Prime Minister Edgar Savisaar's Center Party topped the poll, but a three-party centrist coalition clinched a narrow majority and is poised to freeze him out of negotiations to form a government. President Lennart Meri will choose a party leader to try to form a government when final official results are released on March 17, and does not have to call on the head of the largest party.

Six Libyans on trial in Paris for bombing

PARIS (Reuters) - Six Libyan officials, including the brother-in-law of leader Muammar Gaddafi, went on trial in absentia in Paris yesterday for the 1989 bombing of a French UTA airliner over Africa in which 170 people died.

The hearing began with the prosecutor starting to read the long charge sheet, after which plaintiffs, mostly victims' relatives, were to be called to speak.

The trial is due to last only three days. The prosecution says it has a watertight case against the Libyan secret services and the accused cannot be defended in their absence.

UTA flight 772 was flying over Niger on September 19, 1989, en route for Paris, when it vanished from radar screens. Debris from the DC-10 was found scattered for miles across the desert. There were no survivors. Tests showed that it had been blown out of the sky by a bomb placed in a baggage container.

Oklahoma bomber McVeigh loses court appeal

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The US Supreme Court yesterday let stand Timothy McVeigh's conviction and death sentence for the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing that killed 168 people and injured more than 500 others.

The nation's highest court without any comment or dissent rejected McVeigh's appeal claiming his trial had been improperly tainted by a juror who prejudged his guilt and by news reports he had confessed to his lawyers. McVeigh's lawyers also argued that prospective jurors should have been asked whether they had pre-determined that he should be put to death if he was found guilty of the bombing.

But the Supreme Court sided with the US Justice Department, which said that "extraordinary steps" had been taken to make sure that McVeigh received a fair trial and sentencing from impartial jurors in Denver, Colorado.

Department lawyers said it was unnecessary for the nine Supreme Court members to further review McVeigh's claims that his constitutional rights had been violated.

McVeigh was convicted of murder, conspiracy and weapons-related charges in the April 19, 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah federal building, an attack that prosecutors called the worst act of domestic terrorism in US history.



Monica Lewinsky tries to compose herself before suddenly walking out of a book signing for her just-published biography, 'Monica's Story', at London's Harrods department store yesterday. (AP)

Lewinsky wilts at first book-signing in London

By ASTRID ZWERNERT

LONDON (Reuters) - A tearful Monica Lewinsky wilted just five minutes into a frantic photo session in London yesterday before signing her book 'Monica's Story' about her affair with US President Bill Clinton.

The former White House intern, dubbed by some British newspapers as "the most famous lover in the world", was whisked away by security guards for a rest before facing the public and over 70 photographers at Harrods department store.

Dressed in a navy blue pin-striped trouser suit and only occasionally lifting her eyes off the ground, Lewinsky struggled to keep up a weary smile when photographers bathed her in flash-light for 15 minutes, demanding that she pose with her book.

Wiping a few tears from her eyes, she was led away by security guards for a 40 minute break before returning to continue with the signing at a desk where

Mikhail Gorbachev, Norman Schwarzkopf, and Margaret Thatcher sat to sign their autobiographies.

"It was all a bit overwhelming for her," said Laurie Mayer, Harrods' director of public affairs. "She's not feeling great, she has a bit of a flu."

The photographers, some having waited for over four hours, reacted angrily. "That wasn't much of a photo opportunity. If she wants the publicity she has to put up with us," said one.

Journalists were under strict instructions, at Lewinsky's request, not to ask any questions. Harrods press officer Peter Willasey said the former White House intern would leave the room immediately if anyone posed a question.

The first customers had arrived at 6:30 a.m. and waited for almost six hours to have their books signed. Harrods estimated some 700 people had joined the queue for the hour-long signing.

"The book is a must, it's histo-

ry," said Kip Knippel from Minnesota. "I'd have it signed to commemorate this piece of history."

The Harrods signing session was the first of a 19-bookshop tour across Britain until March 25.

In the book, written by Andrew Morton, the biographer of Princess Diana, Lewinsky makes her first criticism of Kenneth Starr's prosecution team, saying she still lives in fear of it and was almost driven to suicide by her questioners in a hotel room in January 1998.

Dealing with customers seemed to come easier to Lewinsky.

When she re-emerged after her break, she looked relaxed and smiled broadly after the last remaining photographers had been asked to leave.

Harrods said it sold 400 copies of the book within two hours yesterday. More than 700 books, selling at \$24.99 for a hardback copy, had been ordered by phone since last Thursday.

Cohen offers missile monitoring to six Gulf allies

ABU DHABI (Reuters) - US Defense Secretary William Cohen met the president of the United Arab Emirates yesterday and said he had offered to share American monitoring of any Iranian and Iraqi missile tests with six Gulf allies.

Meanwhile, US fighter jets dropped laser-guided bombs on Iraqi and aircraft artillery sites to the northern no-fly zone yesterday after they were threatened by Iraqi radars, a US defense department spokesman said.

Pentagon spokesman Lt. Col. Steve Campbell said US forces did not suffer any injuries and there was no damage to their planes.

An Iraqi military spokesman said one person had been injured when Western warplanes attacked civilian and military targets in both the south and north of the country.

Cohen, emerging from talks with Sheikh Zaid bin Sultan al-Nahayan, said the Pentagon could establish computer terminals in the Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Bahrain to receive real-time US satellite and other intelligence monitoring information on missile tests in the region.

"We would do this with all of the Gulf states - have a direct link between what our sensors pick up and then communicate that to them to keep them apprised of ballistic missile testing taking place in the region," the secretary told reporters travelling with him.

"We think it is beneficial to all of the states and we are hopeful that each state will see it as being in its interests to have that information,"

Cohen said, adding that he and Zaid had discussed the threat from Iran and Iraq in 75 minutes of talks.

US officials said no agreements had yet been reached for such monitoring, but that Cohen had made offers to Saudi Arabia and Oman during visits at the weekend.

The UAE last year announced plans to buy 80 advanced US F-16 warplanes built by Lockheed Martin Corp for some \$6 billion. A defence official said on Monday that Cohen briefly discussed the pending sale in a later meeting with UAE Crown Prince Sheikh Khalifa bin Zaid al-Nahayan.

Cohen, on the fourth leg of a gruelling nine-nation Gulf and Middle East tour to discuss security threats from Iran and Iraq, said that at his meeting with Zaid, he denied what he called local rumors and press reports that the United States "is trying to organize or orchestrate a break-up of Iraq."

"There have been a number of stories and rumors that have been circulated locally that that (a break-up of Iraq) is the objective and goal of the United States," Cohen said of the bombing and current US attempts to aid groups opposing Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

"There is no basis to that. In fact, we have said time and time again that we believe that Iraq's integrity must be maintained," he said.

"Our goal is to one day help bring about a change in regime so that the people of Iraq can, in fact, join the international community as a full-fledged member."

Japanese minister quits over Schwarzenegger scandal

By MARTIN FACKLER

TOKYO (AP) - Japan's justice minister resigned yesterday amid accusations that he helped Hollywood actor Arnold Schwarzenegger enter the country without a passport and then took home paperwork signed by the actor as a souvenir.

Shoizaburo Nakamura, 64, handed his resignation to Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi and said in a statement: "I am sorry my words and actions hindered the workings of parliament. I keenly feel responsibility."

Opposition politicians allege that Nakamura, reportedly a die-hard Schwarzenegger fan, took home ministry documents that permitted the actor to enter Japan October 27 without a passport. The documents should have been filed with the ministry.

Schwarzenegger later said he arrived without his passport because

it was stolen just before he left the United States. The actor, who has appeared in Japanese television commercials for instant noodles, beer and cable TV, was in Japan to attend an opening ceremony for a Universal Studios theme park.

This is not the first time Nakamura has stirred controversy. In January, he suggested in a widely reported speech to members of his ministry that Japan's constitution "was imposed by Allied forces" and should be revised to allow the nation more military freedom.

Nakamura also criticized US economic policy in the speech, comparing it to attacking an adversary with "atomic bombs and missiles when another country looks to be winning."

The resignation was the second from Obuchi's cabinet since he took office last summer. The head of Japan's Defense Agency resigned in November amid a scandal over pro-



Arnold Schwarzenegger

curement contracts for military equipment.

But with opinion polls showing rising public approval for prime minister's handling of the economy, Obuchi appears likely to weather the storm.

Obuchi picked upper house law-

maker Takao Jinnouchi, 65, as Nakamura's replacement, said a ministry official who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Jinnouchi, a former Construction Ministry bureaucrat, was sworn in at a ceremony at the Imperial Palace last night.

"I deeply recognize the importance of my job during these harsh times for Japan and other nations and will try my best for our country's prosperity and development," Jinnouchi said in a statement.

Two parliamentary committee meetings were canceled Friday because the chief opposition party, the Democratic Party of Japan, and two smaller parties threatened to boycott them if Nakamura didn't step down.

The opposition parties welcomed the minister's resignation and called on the Obuchi administration to take responsibility for the controversy. A formal censure motion has also been discussed.

Khatami begins courtship of West

DUBAI (AP) - Iranian President Mohammad Khatami was to begin courting Europe today during the first state visit to the West by an Iranian leader since the 1979 Islamic revolution that severed relations with the United States.

The three-day trip to Italy is immensely important politically and economically to Iran, a nation trying to improve relations with Europe and attract investors to aid its creaking economy.

For its part, the European Union has proven a willing partner, overlooking evidence of Iranian involvement in dissident killings in Europe and ignoring a US embargo on Iran. Italian Foreign Minister Lamberto Dini said in an interview published Sunday in Italy that Rome hopes to be a bridge between Iran and the West.

Meanwhile, reformers allied with Khatami scored a spectacular success against conservatives in a high-profile race late last month for Tehran's city council, unofficial results indicated yesterday.

Results published by the official IRNA news agency showed reformers sweeping all but two of the capital's 15 council seats in the

February 26 poll. The two others are technocrats jointly presented by a pro-

Khatami moderate group and the conservative slate. Two reformers also led a list of

six reserves for the Tehran council, followed by an independent and three conservatives.

Adams warns of looming crisis as British-Irish ministers sign for treaties

DUBLIN (Reuters) - Gerry Adams, head of the IRA's political wing, warned yesterday that Northern Ireland's peace process was sliding into crisis because of a long-running deadlock about guerrilla disarmament and new political institutions.

The British and Irish governments "are going to have to focus in a way which they haven't done so before if they are to rescue this process," Sinn Fein chief Adams said in Belfast ahead of talks in Dublin with Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern.

His warning came as British and Irish ministers signed four treaties on new political structures that were seen as giving a fresh boost to a faltering peace plan in the British-ruled province.

But a yawning gulf between

Protestant and Roman Catholic politicians on disarmament and the creation of a coalition cabinet to administer the region blocks full implementation of the landmark "Good Friday" peace deal, signed in April 1998.

Ministers who helped draw up the accord - seen as Northern Ireland's best hope for peace - hailed the treaties as a sign of harmony and urged an end to the latest impasse over IRA weapons.

Adams, locked in a bitter dispute with pro-British Unionists led by First Minister David Trimble, painted a gloomy picture of the current difficulties.

Trimble, the main leader of the majority Protestant community, says he will not sit in cabinet with Adams' Sinn Fein party unless the Irish Republican Army (IRA) hands

in the arms used during its 30-year war against British rule.

The IRA has called ceasefire, but refuses to hand over its weapons. Now Britain seems certain to postpone until the end of the month tomorrow's planned transfer of powers from London to the home-land coalition.

Trimble, who has invited Adams to crunch talks today, says IRA disarmament is required by the "Good Friday" deal and is the only way that unionists will be satisfied about republicans' peace credentials.

The treaties signed in Dublin pave the way for some of the institutions - such as a British-Irish Council and all-Ireland committees to promote trade and other sectors - that were promised in the Good Friday agreement.

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No bull market yet

Stock markets are notoriously mercurial, so attempting to divine anything about the future from their activity is a risky business. But if the stock market does not necessarily reflect the future, it can tell us something about what people expect it to be. Judging from the vigorous and positive trading on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange on Sunday, capping a sharp rise over the past two weeks, the market predicts a bright future for the economy.

On Sunday, the Maof Index of the 25 most-traded shares rose 3.1 percent, ending at 344.22 points, on very heavy trading of NIS 441 million. Though the rally had ended by yesterday, over the past two weeks the market rose a total of over 13%.

Though Thursday's sharp gains on Wall Street may have helped inspire this week's optimism in Tel Aviv, most analysts believe that the primary motivations for the jump are homegrown.

First, there is the general bullish atmosphere that has historically surrounded elections. According to a study of the last five elections by investment house Ilanot Betucha, the TASE went up an average of 32% in election years, compared to an average annual rise of 7.6% since 1980. Still, the current gains are bucking the trend, since the quarter before elections tended to post below-average gains, while the market would leap forward in the quarter after the elections, regardless of which party won.

Stock markets abhor uncertainty, so it is perhaps natural that they prefer a new government to one in the midst of an electoral campaign. In this case, the markets may be predicting a more stable, broad-based government, regardless of who wins.

Even more than election-based optimism, analysts are pointing to the expectation of gradually falling interest rates as the stock market's inspiration. The shekel seems to have stabilized following the sharp devaluation in October, and the Bank of Israel succeeded in quashing the attendant inflationary flare-up. In short, the market seems to believe that the worst of the slowdown is behind us and the economy is bound to return to a path of growth.

International market analysts, still reeling from the financial crises in Asia, Russia, and South America, are beginning to see Israel as a

bright spot among the now treacherous "emerging markets." An article in Friday's *Wall Street Journal* stated, "In a year when many buyers are shunning developing countries altogether, some investors see potential in Israel, the Philippines, and Turkey, citing falling interest rates, improving consumer demand, or economic restructuring." The recent heavy trading, however, was reportedly not led by foreign investors or by individual Israelis, but by local institutional investors.

With high interest rates delivering an attractive return on low-risk investments, the public seems in no hurry to return to the stock market. The sluggishness among individual investors indicates that a more optimistic mood will not be enough to create a sustained bull market in the TASE on the Wall Street model. The leading edge of the economy - hi-tech companies - still prefers to raise money on foreign exchanges.

Plans to allow trading of Israeli stocks on Wall Street through the TASE (in shekels) could help entice individuals back to the market, and are worth pursuing. But making it easier to trade Israeli stocks in foreign bourses will not address the structural impediments to a healthier capital market.

The push for privatization, as important and necessary as it is, has not addressed and sometimes has even perpetuated, the heavy concentration of ownership of Israeli companies. When so many dominant corporations are owned by a small group of investors, individual investors cannot be sure that their interests as small stockholders will be pursued.

Though the major banks are slowly being forced to spin off their corporate holdings, the economy is still characterized by a tight web of interconnected interests, not easily transparent or penetrable to the individual investor.

The disconnect between stock markets and the economy that most people feel exists in the United States - as witnessed by the craze over Internet stocks - as it does in Israel. Still, a freer capital market would be good for the economy as a whole, and should be a priority for the next government. Until then, the investor is right to be cautious in concluding that the economic summer has arrived, and that the storms of winter are truly behind us.

OPINION

Change the status quo

YOSSI BEILIN

For 50 years, most political parties in Israel swore by the religious status quo. And despite the fact that, in reality, the status quo has gradually eroded in one direction or the other over the years, anyone who peruses party manifestos will still notice that it is considered a taboo subject.

Both the religious and secular camps are afraid of tampering

belief that on the verge of the 21st century, we are continuing to abide by a status quo which few people truly understand, and even fewer know how it was formulated.

It is inconceivable that we have failed to recognize the various streams which have developed in Judaism; that public transport does not operate on Shabbat, and that couples who wish to marry

Anyone who seeks to preserve the status quo is using a term which is both unreal and irrelevant

with this concept for fear of opening a Pandora's box which, heaven forbid, may lead to outright war between the two groups.

Like many elements of our life, from our emigration to the Lebanese quagmire to the continued existence of both the Jewish Agency despite the founding of the state, and the existence of the Jewish National Fund despite the establishment of the Israel Lands Administration, it seems inconceivable that the promise made by David Ben-Gurion, then head of the Jewish Agency, to the leaders of Agudat Yisrael that the religious status quo existing in 1948 would be maintained, is now being perpetuated into the 21st century.

Since then, everything has changed, including the make-up of the country's population and technological advances. It is beyond

but are prevented from doing so by the rabbinate because one partner is a Kohen and the other a divorcee, are still unable to do so in a civil ceremony. It is also inconceivable that a group numbering half-a-million people discharges itself from military service in God's name.

AS the 20th century draws to a close, anyone who seeks to preserve the status quo is using a term which is both unreal and irrelevant. It begs the belief that all of us, religious and secular, zealously guard an agreement which attempts to freeze time, and which - due to the nature of things - fails to do so. It would be a major achievement if we could ensure that Israel had greater Jewish depth and less religious legislation: more Jewish studies, more Talmud and Bible and fewer laws

Dry Bones



which push away so many good Jews from a love of Judaism.

There is a chance that One Israel, which at this moment in time is being founded, will for the first time in 50 years not enshrine this status quo and will, instead, propose an alternative based in part on the social contract signed last year by MK Alex Lubotzky, the leaders of Meimad and myself.

The very fact that Meimad has become a part of One Israel will enable the new body to propose a real change, which a secular party would perhaps not dare to do.

Modern Orthodox rabbis, who appreciate that today's society

necessitates change, and who believe that a freeze may lead to catastrophe, may make it easier for Labor to propose changes in Shabbat observance in the public domain, in marriage and divorce, to abolish the religious councils, and abandon the need for two chief rabbis (Ashkenazi and Sephardi) in the major cities, as well as act on other issues.

One Israel is not just a coalition aimed at winning the election by joining forces. It is also a hope for real change in Israel's fragile religious-secular relations. This is the most critical problem facing Israeli society after peace.

Opening up the airwaves

EVELYN GORDON

Whatever the High Court of Justice eventually decides about the law to legalize pirate radio stations, it is clear that there is merit on both sides of the argument.

The newly enacted law, whose implementation the court postponed yesterday, legalizes any pirate station that had been broadcasting continuously for five years as of January 1, 1999, and whose broadcasts were receivable in most of Israel. Though there are dozens of pirate stations in Israel, this law will apply only to a handful. Of these, by far the best known and most controversial is Arutz 7.

The numerous petitions to the High Court against the law all argue that it is improper, because it essentially rewards persistent criminals. And there is an element of truth to this claim of impropriety: The flip side of the fact that the new law rewards law-breakers is the fact that it penalizes those who obeyed the law. Anyone who wanted to operate a radio station, but waited patiently for the broadcasting laws to be revised, is still no closer than ever to getting a license while those went ahead and broke the law now have their licenses practically in hand.

This is not only an injustice; it also actively encourages law-breaking. Thus, whether or not there are legal grounds for invalidating the law, the petitioners' objections on this score are justified on moral grounds, and ought to be reconsidered by the Knesset.

However, there is another aspect of the petitioners' claim which is completely unjustified - the argument that because stations like Arutz 7 broke the law, they should now be ineligible for licenses.

One potential problem with this argument is that Arutz 7 may be innocent. The station says it never broke the law, as it broadcast strictly from international waters, and this claim is now being tested in a different court case. But even were Arutz 7 to be found guilty, the peculiar circumstances governing radio broadcasting in Israel would justify overlooking this fact.

For most of the past 50 years, radio has been an absolute government monopoly, with every station owned and operated either by the state-run Israel Broadcasting Authority (IBA) or the army. A few years ago, the government finally allowed the first crack in its monopoly by introducing regional radio stations. However, these stations were forbidden to compete with the IBA and Army Radio in numerous capacities.

They were not, for instance, permitted to air their own news broadcasts. Furthermore, they were limited to narrow geographic regions: the government permitted no national competitor to its

stations. And worst of all, each station was carefully picked from among a number of applicants by a government tender committee.

In other words, the tender winners were chosen not because they did the best job of satisfying their regional listeners, but because they did the best job of satisfying a handful of government clerks.

As a result, very broad sections of the public were left with no radio station that met their needs. Though the IBA insists that it offers a wide enough variety of programming to satisfy all listeners, the very success of the pirate stations belies this claim.

IT is no accident that the two major stations to be legalized by the new law are the right-wing Arutz 7 and a hard-left station run by Shas. These stations have survived financially for the past five years because they have large listening populations that consider their needs unmet by the government stations.

Precisely because freedom of expression is a fundamental democratic freedom, there is no excuse for a democracy to deny certain segments of the population access to the airwaves, as long as these groups can support a station without state funding (and, of course, within the limitations of

available broadcast frequencies). By doing so, the government was in a very real sense abusing its power. Yet all the protests and lobbying against this situation led to no more of a concession than the creation of the regional radio stations, which, as noted above, did little to solve the problem.

It is in this kind of situation that civil disobedience is sometimes justified. Sometimes repeated violations of an unjust law are the only means to effect change. And Arutz 7 is a perfect example. The unpalatable truth is that the Knesset would probably never have moved to end the government's radio monopoly had the police and prosecution not been threatening to close the station for its alleged violations.

It was only the station's persistent law-breaking coupled with the extraordinary popularity, and consequent political pressure, it engendered among its target audience that brought the Knesset to act. Yet in the long run, the end of this monopoly will benefit all Israelis.

It would be extremely unjust to bar the station from the fruits of a change it was principally responsible for effecting. Yet it is also wrong to penalize those who obeyed the law for their obedience. The only proper solution is for the Knesset to pass a much more liberal law, opening the airwaves to all who meet a minimal set of licensing requirements.

The US role for a Palestinian state

HENRY SIEGMAN

Even among supporters of Palestinian statehood, the weight of opinion is that a unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) would put Palestinians at a disadvantage. For it would free Israel to annex much of the West Bank and to retain permanently the capacity to choke the new state by imposing closure on non-contiguous, isolated areas of Palestinian rule. Palestinians would wind up with a state that is radically unviable and cannot survive.

UDI must therefore be weighed by Palestinians against the prospect of a viable state resulting from a negotiated agreement with Israel. The answer to that question depends on who will emerge as winners in the upcoming elections for prime minister and the Knesset. A convincing case can be made that Palestinians would be well advised to delay a decision about UDI until after a new Israeli government is formed.

Admittedly, the prospects for viable Palestinian statehood in the best of circumstances (i.e. a new Labor-led government) are sufficiently uncertain that it can be argued that Palestinian leaders lose more by postponing UDI to a later date than by declaring it on May 4.

Those who dismiss this argument are, for the most part, incapable of attaching any seriousness to the Palestinian desire to be rid of the Israeli occupation. They underestimate the political price Palestinian leaders pay when they are seen as backing down in the face of Israeli resoluteness, particularly on so fundamental an issue as their right to self-determination.

Nevertheless, UDI on May 4 would be a serious mistake, for if Binyamin Netanyahu returns to power, Palestinians will be blamed for that outcome. It would jeopardize the new friendship and understanding that has developed between President Clinton and his administration and Yasser Arafat, which constitute the most important - indeed, the only - Palestinian accomplishment since Netanyahu assumed office. Given the Palestinians' paucity of political assets, it is an advantage they should not squander.

The real question for Palestinians, and therefore also for Israel and the US, is what Palestinians should do after the election results are clear. If Netanyahu emerges as the victor once again and forms a right-wing government, there is no longer any justification to delay UDI.

In these circumstances, Palestinians risk very little by declaring unilateral statehood, for the likelihood that such an Israeli government would consent to the establishment of a viable Palestinian state is zero.

Indeed, in these circumstances UDI could only improve Palestinian prospects, for the end of Oslo means that no matter what areas Israel annexes, the ultimate geographic reach of Palestinian statehood would remain an open question, and could be held by the international community to include all of the West Bank and Gaza, including East Jerusalem. In the absence of mutually agreed

borders, a newly-established Palestinian state is likely to base its geographic claims on original UN resolutions, claims that will receive considerable international support.

The downside for Israel of Palestinian UDI is therefore considerable and grave. In the short run, UDI may result in violence and bloodshed that will punish Palestinians disproportionately. In the long run, however, it may do serious damage to Israel's claim to "secure and recognized borders," a prospect that is jeopardized if Palestinians are given no inducement to delay UDI.

One could argue that the situation of the Palestinians would not be much different even if a candidate from the Center or the Left wins the election. The map of a Palestinian state envisioned by Ehud Barak, Yitzhak Mordechai or even Amnon Lipkin-Shahak is not significantly different than the one held by Netanyahu, Ariel Sharon and Moshe Arens.

And yet, there is a critical difference between Right and Left in Israel. That difference has little to do with maps, but is determined by fundamentally different approaches to the peace process. For Netanyahu and the Right, the peace process is a zero-sum game. Every concession to the Palestinians is seen as a net setback for Israel. For the Left, however, satisfying Palestinian aspirations to live in freedom and national dignity is seen as a vital Israeli security interest.

For the Left, the peace process is therefore a potentially win-win game. Those who approach the peace process in these terms can come to understand that a non-viable Palestinian state does not advance Israel's security interests, and that viability requires that the overwhelming majority of the territories be returned.

While such evolution in Israeli thinking is possible, it is hardly inevitable. It would therefore be necessary for Palestinians to receive certain minimal assurances to justify the risks entailed in postponing UDI even if an Israeli centrist or left-wing government takes over.

Such assurances would have to include the immediate implementation of the Wye agreement, an end to settlement activity and explicit acknowledgment by the US administration (since such a formal acknowledgment may not be forthcoming from the new Israeli government), supported by the European community, that the purpose of final-stage negotiations is not only security for Israel but also viable statehood for Palestinians.

The US has insisted it is the key third party in the Middle East peace process, to the virtual exclusion of Europe. That insistence has created a situation where only the US can prevent the collapse of the peace process by providing the necessary assurances to justify a Palestinian decision to delay UDI, assurances that cannot credibly be given by other parties.

The writer is a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TEDIOUS CRITICISM

Sir - I read with some interest your recent interview in *Time Out* ("A queen of causes," February 12) with my classmate of over thirty years ago, Susan Sarandon. While I'm very happy with the enormous success that Susan, a very talented and, as I remember her, a very funny lady, has enjoyed for the last thirty years, I'm writing this letter to confess that I find it more than a little tedious hearing an ex-Catholic loud out the equivalent of "the usual suspects" in decrying the failures of the Catholic Church.

As for failures, we are The Church of failed men and women. We are, after all, the Church not only of Peter, Paul and Mother Theresa, but also the Church of

Judas Iscariot, Hitler and Al Capone. If those of us who take, or try to take, Jesus Christ seriously were only hypocrites, we'd be better than we are. It was Chesterton who observed, "anything worth doing is worth doing badly." The fact is we are all failures humanly speaking, and perhaps theologically speaking.

I saw during the 1960s those same priests running off to marry those same nuns that my classmate did. It is also a fact that starting in college, and for several years afterwards, I pretty much ceased to be a Christian. The faith that my generation took with us to university did not accompany us on our exit from school four years later.

It was only due to a miracle of

God's love that some time later I was able to come to know better the God I'd rejected, and His incredible mercy for the poor earthenware creatures with immortal souls he created.

If I really believed that Christianity was only as big as I am, I would indeed despair. And so the world despises the Church. It has ever been thus. But when the whole, gray, groaning world is reduced to metaphysical ashes, God and the things of God, which are forever young, will remain.

REV. GIAN MARIA LACORTE, OFM

Nazareth.

CATHOLIC PILGRIMS

Sir - In your March 5 report on my comment concerning the preparations for the millennium, it appears as if I indicated that Christian pilgrims are not coming to Israel to proselytize except for Catholics.

As far as the latter is concerned, nothing could be further from the

truth. The Catholic Church has officially distanced itself from proselytizing amongst Jews and the millions of Catholic pilgrims who will be coming here to celebrate the new millennium are coming out of their own religious connections to the Holy Land and in a spirit of respect for the identity

and beliefs of the citizens of the State of Israel.

RABBI DAVID ROSEN
Director,
Anti-Defamation League,
Israel Office

Jerusalem.

EDELSTEIN'S WINDOW DRESSING

Sir - So Absorption Minister Yuli Edelstein wants to change the name of the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption. Before he considers such window dressing he should seriously consider changing the way the ministry functions.

Let me give an example from my own experience. I was told by a clerk at the ministry's office in Netanyahu three years ago, that since I had been in Israel before, I needed proof that I was not on the citizen registry.

I had been to the Interior Ministry the previous day, and a clerk there had searched in their

data base and told me that, as I knew, I was not on this list. I asked the clerk in the Absorption Ministry to check the computer and/or call the person at the Interior Ministry. She told me first, that their computer systems were not connected, and second that she would not call to confirm this, but that I had to go back to the Interior Ministry and bring a form to prove that I was not listed!

So I went back to the Interior Ministry, waited in line again for hours, and when I saw the same clerk there, she said "why didn't you ask me for a form?" Then she

took a form off her shelf, signed and stamped it and I had to pay NIS 20 to prove that I was not on a list!

How to overcome some of these problems? I made a serious suggestion in a letter to the former absorption minister and to an official of Yisrael Ba'aliya before the previous election.

There should be a one-stop office for all immigrants, staffed by a single group of clerks from whatever ministries are needed.

JACK S. COHEN

Netanya.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

65 years ago: On March 9, 1934, *The Palestine Post* reported that many Jewish railwaymen had left their jobs due to low wages and poor general conditions. The number of Jews still employed among the railway personnel was below

200 out of 3,000. Jews who wished to work on Sunday, instead of Saturday, were refused permission by the Railway Administration.

50 years ago: On March 9, 1949, *The Palestine Post* reported that Prime Minister David Ben-

Gurion had presented to the Knesset a government program which included a four-year development plan aimed at the doubling of the country's population.

Alexander Zvielli

سكدا من الأصل

'Creep' or canny careerist?

The multimillionaire biographer who followed up 'Diana: Her True Story' with 'Monica's Story' dismisses his critics as jealous of his success, writes David Streitfeld



A customer at the Barnes and Noble store on New York's Fifth Avenue flips through 'Monica's Story'.

Back home in London, Andrew Morton has a cartoon on the wall of his study. It shows a mother and father reading their little girl a fairy tale. "Well," she asks, "if the prince and princess don't live happily ever after, who does?"

"The author?" they answer. Morton's life couldn't be summed up any more neatly. He made a fortune by writing about Princess Diana, and after the crash in the Paris tunnel he made bundles more.

Now comes Monica Lewinsky, who promptly confessed to the writer those few intimate things — an abortion, a revenge fling with the brother of her first lover, suicidal thoughts — that she hadn't been forced to tell Ken Starr.

"She was very candid with me, in a way that she rather regrets," Morton reports. "She figures she was probably a bit too open, and said too much."

But if Lewinsky's sorry now, Morton is practically exultant. He's struck the "royal chronicler" label, he's the official mouthpiece for the woman at the center of the biggest news story of the last 14 months, and he's on his way to becoming a familiar name in the US, a place he quite likes.

Things are looking very nice indeed.

"This was a great career move," he says by phone from his New York hotel last week.

At last! One person in this saga who isn't afraid to be honest.

"The money," Morton notes, "was secondary."

You mean you got paid, too? Accounts of the book deal — Lewinsky is said to be getting \$1.5 million — always seemed to imply that the multimillionaire biographer was doing this as a lark.

"Let's get this right. I'm from Yorkshire," apparently a money-grubbing part of the British Isles. "Of course I'm being paid. I'm getting royalties."

He declines to detail how the money is being split.

MORTON'S day began with a *Today* show appearance, and continued with reporters lined up outside his hotel suite.

Lewinsky isn't talking anymore, not only because the independent counsel has put constraints on chats with reporters, but because the publisher figures she's gotten enough exposure.

More interviews can only hurt; two publishing executives interviewed last week said that the Barbara Walters chat-fest, which was watched by 49 million Americans, might have been so lengthy as to have dampened rather than stoked enthusiasm for the book. In this, as in so many other things, Lewinsky didn't know when to quit.

Still, *Monica's Story* has gotten a strong start. Barnes & Noble says its on-line division sold an "amazing" 2.8 copies per minute last Wednesday, even before the two-hour *20/20* show. An Amazon.com spokesman says its rate last Thursday was an "astounding" 4.8 per minute.

In the real world, a Barnes & Noble spokeswoman says, there was a frenzy Thursday morning for copies, but it was caused by journalists and wouldn't last. Says the chain's Mary Ellen Keating: "We still think it's a three-week book."

That the former intern would write a book was inevitable; Morton's involvement was not.

"I would like to be able to boast that she thought me her ideal biographer because I had written about Diana, Princess of Wales, and that she loved my prose style," he writes in the foreword to *Monica's Story*.

Actually, she had never read his best-sellers, or even thought much about Diana.

What brought them together was a British reporter's story that Morton was in fact doing the tell-all. Lewinsky's lawyer saw the article, contacted Morton's publisher and brokered a deal.

From false facts come real consequences. Morton gives a kind of verbal shrug, as if to say: The press, they can't be trusted.

THE British press doesn't think much of him, either.

"A hack." "A tabloid scribbler." "He obviously discovered his forte as a royal reporter, oiling up to the flunkies." "He thought Diana was in love with him."

He dismisses these quotations from old profiles.

"The British style is a world of envy and jealousy," he says. "But

you have to surf through it."

Even the British reporters concede that the 45-year-old biographer is a hard worker. In less than three months, he researched and wrote 135,000 words on Lewinsky, interviewing not only her but her family and friends.

He says he had no help. "You can't trust people. They'll steal it and sell it." He did his own typing, too. "My fingers are still sore."

Enough of this shop talk: How's our girl holding up?

"I spoke to her last night. She was very nervous about how the interview was going to play in America. She had wanted to do it for a long time, and she was very anxious."

Morton and Lewinsky are friends now. He's indulgent toward her. He doesn't agree that she, like the president, should have exercised some

restraint. In the beginning, "it was a fling — great fun, and a way of forgetting her previous lover." But shouldn't she have known better than to have a fling?

"You watch some of these journalists talking about these things, it's like watching a convocation of angels... Let's get down to its basics. This is the world's most famous office romance. And if you're telling me that in Washington there aren't a lot of office romances going on, you're living in cloud-cuckoo land."

MOREOVER, the Clinton-Lewinsky affair barely qualifies as a scandal when put up against some of the shenanigans of the British royal family.

Morton spent a decade covering those folks, working for the *News of the World*, the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Star*. In his spare time he penned a bio of Prince Andrew, a history of the royal yacht, a bio of the Duchess of York.

Then, while writing a book about Princess Diana, he slipped some questions to her through a mutual friend and hit the jackpot. She responded with tapes about her suicide tries, her bulimia, and Charles' adultery.

Diana: Her True Story, sold seven million copies and did much to win sympathy for the princess, which was of course her goal.

But when Morton issued a sequel, *Diana: Her New Life*, the secret relationship soured, and the princess issued a statement calling the book "a mishmash of tedious secondhand gossip assembled by Mr. Morton for his own benefit."

After her death, Morton transcribed the tapes and published them.

"A loathsome creep gorging on the memory of the woman who handed him his check," was the verdict of Bob Geldof, the pop singer turned humanitarian.

Still, give Morton points for unconventionality. He followed up the Diana books with a biography of Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi, not an obviously commercial project.

Moi, who has ruled the African country for two decades, has been accused of ethnic cleansing as well as torturing his opponents. Morton, however, saw Moi as "more sinned against than sinning," and said the Western media had created a distorted view.

The portrait that the biographer drew in *Moi: The Making of an African Statesman* was so rosy that there were allegations he had been bribed by the strongman (Morton denied them).

Another theory was that Morton, as one commentator put it, "was writing about some other President Moi." (The Washington Post)

Pure Palestinian

I'd only been in the country about three years when I met Ya'acov Castel, and just about everyone I knew then was a recent immigrant. He seemed rather colorless, but quiet and decent: perfect for a new flatmate.

"Tell me what kind of Israeli you are," I said on our first day together. "So I'll know who not to make jokes about."

He smiled. "I'm no kind, so feel free."

"But you have to be from somewhere," I insisted. His answer floored me. "I'm a 17th-generation Jerusalemite. So I suppose you could call me a Palestinian."

I tracked him down again a couple of weeks ago; he's now Lt.-Col. Castel.

The first thing I wanted to know was, is there an 18th-generation Castel? Yes, he has two daughters. But he hadn't told me the whole story 15 years ago.

"My father's side came here during the Spanish Inquisition, 18 generations ago, but my mother," Ya'acov laughs, "she calls him 'the new immigrant'."

Her side of the family is here since the time of the Second

"I've inherited something from both sides," he says.

AS you would expect, there is a great sense of pride in the family. Or families.

"At weddings, we're very aware of what it means. It's not just our history: it's our culture, our identity."

His mother's family numbers "merely" in the hundreds. There's thousands of Castels, split into three historical branches: Jerusalem, Hebron and Gaza-Safed, plus others who fled the Inquisition and went to Vienna, staying there until World War I.

"It's said if the Castels all voted as a bloc, we could account for a Knesset mandate."

The Castels, who originate from Toledo, Castile, are so-called "Samekh-Teim" — the Hebrew initials standing for Sephardi *tahor*, or pure Sephardi.

"Up to my father, my family spoke Ladino. Unfortunately, I'm the first generation that doesn't speak it."

"But these labels aren't really relevant to us. Culturally, I'm more Oriental, certainly, but our

'My father's side came here during the Spanish Inquisition... but my mother calls him 'the new immigrant'

Temple. At least."

His mother is from Peki'in, the Galilee village renowned for having the longest sustained Jewish presence in the country.

"She grew up in Peki'in, but when she was 17 all the Jews had to leave, because of the Arab revolt of 1936-39. In fact, she met face to face with [Fawzi] Kaukji [who became commander of the Arab Liberation Army in 1948]."

"The Peki'in Jews all moved to Haifa, then later relocated to Hadera, where I was born." Then perhaps he's no more than a first-generation Haderan.

"Maybe. The truth is, I don't even live in Jerusalem anymore, though I'd be. We live in Re'u. My wife's from Haifa, and she hates Jerusalem."

"To paraphrase Agnon, 'I'm a Jerusalemite. It's just by an accident of nature that I was born in Hadera.'"

His wider maternal pedigree embraces the ancient Zenati family — "They left Peki'in with everyone, but returned a year later to tend to their lands, the only ones who did" — and the Tuma clan.

"My father's family is urbane, less naive, more open to multiculturalism, more serious... even cynical. My mother's family is rural, more naive, *hamula* in structure; very, very close and self-involved and cooperative. There are no petty jealousies and keeping of accounts. It's hard to find that nowadays."

identity? With us, you can't look at it like that."

Indeed, his forebears were here when most of world Jewry was out in the Diaspora, splitting itself into Sephardi and Ashkenazi spheres.

Ya'acov is a historian, and as such, "I need to know how much of the lore is historically provable. My mother's side can go back for certain to the 1300s. That is, 700 years we've been here, uninterrupted. Beyond that, there's no doubt the line continues, but it's harder to find evidence. Many believe we've been living here since the days of Joshua, 3,200 years ago."

"However, it's probable that the family goes back to the time of the Second Temple."

"On the side of the 'new immigrants,' I'm only 17th generation. But on my mother's side, if I go by history, at least 25 generations; if I go by traditional beliefs, well, who knows."

"My oldest daughter Noa is eight, and she's starting to understand. Her teacher is talking about it. Noa asked me how long we've been here, so I prepared a presentation for her third-grade class."

"Why did you do that?"

"Because the other kids joked that I arrived here with Abraham from Babylon."

Kid toy inventor's play day is a payday

Junior tycoon Richie Stachowski has already invented half-a-dozen toys and has founded a flourishing toy company. And he's only 13. Paula Span met with this seventh-grade success

OK, the first time Richie Stachowski had to pitch his invention to the buyers at Toys R Us, he was a bit jittery. He was only 11 then; he'd never been to a sales meeting. He and his mom had flown all the way from San Francisco to the retailer's New Jersey headquarters — and what if the buyer didn't think it was all that cool to be able to chat with your friends underwater?

Richie, recalling this dramatic moment in his entrepreneurial career, is 13 now, a cusp age for any kid, but particularly for one who's half seventh-grade sports nut and half Hasbro.

He looks ordinary enough, in sneakers and cargo jeans that puddle around his ankles, but bow normal is it to have invented Water Talkies and founded a flourishing toy company before your voice changed?

And then to have sold said company in a just-announced deal with Wild Planet Toys that will make you more than a million bucks by the time you graduate from high school?

Giving interviews amidst the feverish huckstering of the industry's annual Toy Fair, Richie Soon-to-be-Rich tends to veer between early-adolescent goofiness and unnerving business savvy.

That scary meeting? Turned out OK: "The buyer offered me pretzels and a Pepsi." And then? "Sold close to 50,000 units. Which was followed by Kmart and Target." Oh.

IN the interests of preventing child abuse — lest parents lash out at underachievers who have not yet incorporated — it should be noted that Richie Stachowski was probably genetically destined for this.

His mother, Barbara, is an inventor, specializing in hair-styling gizmos, and so is his uncle. By age two, Barbara Stachowski reports while her only child wharms a Tokyo TV crew, "he would take apart clock radios. And not put them back together." To protect the household, she started buying him garage sale

appliances to dismember.

"Ever since I was born I've been inventing little things," Richie confirms. "I came up with little contraptions to help me climb trees... I had a walking-on-water design when I was, like, five."

And what was that like? "I can't be that detailed because I might want to bring it to market." Oh.

He's got six products now, starting with Water Talkies, for which inspiration struck during a family vacation in Hawaii. He and his dad, a mortgage broker, were snorkeling in Honolulu Bay.

"One of the best places I've ever snorkeled," says Richie, with almost kid-like enthusiasm. "We saw eels and turtles. I saw a shark."

The frustrating thing was, there was so much he would've liked to say — "Take a picture!" "Look at that!" — and no way to do it.

He started sketching ideas for an underwater communications device: back home in Contra Costa County, Calif., he logged onto the Internet and looked up "underwater acoustics." Early prototypes of Water Talkies were fashioned from Coke cans.

AND here's the result, which Richie calmly demonstrates in an aquarium set up in Wild Planet's showroom. "You talk through the purple mouthpiece," he lectures. "Your air and sound travel through the Water Talkie. The air comes out these blow valves. And the sound vibrates this membrane — it's a thinner plastic — and comes out the other end." He lowers the bright plastic object into the tank; a ready voice emerges.

"Hello! Hear me talking to you underwater?" Then there's his Aqua Scope, which allows swimmers to see what's on the surface, and the Bumper Jumper Water

Pumper, an inflatable you ride while blasting your buddies with a water gun that doubles as a paddle. And, new for 1999, Pool Pogo. "Probably my favorite," says its inventor. "You can bounce off the walls of the pool."

With a little help from adults — including a veteran businessman who oversaw manufacturing and distribution — Richie's limited-liability corporation, Short Stack, sold hundreds of thousands of these water toys, at retail prices ranging from \$10 to \$30.

But it's not so simple expanding your business, receiving entrepreneurial awards and making a Letterman show appearance — all while keeping your grades up and playing basketball, lacrosse and

Pop Warner football (he's a line-backer).

Short Stack "got really big," Richie says. "If I wanted to carry it on I'd have to hire employees and all that."

Wild Planet, with sales last year in the \$15-20 million range, was happy to take on the "all that."

Kid inventors are unusual but not unheard of in the toy biz. Another Wild Planet product, Light Hand, was developed by a nine-year-old. Junior tycoon Mary Rodas was 13 when she invented the Balzac Balloon Ball, now licensed to Wham-O, a few years back. Companies find kid inventors to be good idea sources — and better PR gimmicks than unemployed actors in fuzzy char-

acter suits.

"I liked what I saw," says Wild Planet President Dan Grossman, who met with Richie and his team last summer. "He was a dreamer, but he's rooted in reality. He has great ideas — hey, how come you can't talk underwater? — and then he goes back and makes up something and tries it out and refines it."

While Wild Planet and the Stachowskis don't want to get too specific, Grossman confirms that the boy's deal will provide more than \$1 million within five years.

But unlike the comic book Richie, this one won't be hiring a butler — at least not for a while. To celebrate, he bought himself a surfboard; everything else goes into trust until he's 35.

Meanwhile, he'll get by on his five-back-a-week allowance. "My parents suggested it but I thought it was a good idea," he says of this arrangement, sounding awfully mature though he's fiddling with the laces of his Air Jordans. "So it can grow in the bank until I need it." (The Washington Post)

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GRAPEVINE

By GREER FAY CASHMAN



Just deserts: Mira Avrech (right) with Shlomo and Ziva Lahat

Advertising on the Internet is no longer a novelty, but fund-raising, at least as far as Israel is concerned, is still in cyber-diapers. Nonetheless, when EKEKO, a company specializing in the creation of Internet sites, decided to sponsor a fund-raiser for children living in shelters for battered women, it managed to raise NIS 24,000 via an Internet auction.

Among the items on sale were the dress worn by Judy Nir-Mozes when she married Silvan Shalom, a Maccabi Tel Aviv basketball singlet belonging to Nadav Henefeld and another to Guy Goodes, a towel used by singer Shlomo Artzi while on tour, and a genuine flamenco dress belonging to actress Hannah Marron. EKEKO general manager Eyal Kofit presented the check last Tuesday to Ronit Lev-Ari, representing the Forum of Shelters for Battered Women.

ALTHOUGH his Israel Land Development Corporation company owns and manages several hotels, *Mu'ariv* publisher Ofer Nimrodi chose the classy new David Intercontinental hotel in Tel Aviv as the venue for his wedding to Ravi Drori.

Nimrodi's recent sojourn in prison didn't seem to worry the invitees, who included President Ezer Weizman, former president Yitzhak Navon, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and prime-ministerial candidates Ehud Barak and Yitzhak Mordechai.

The bride made no effort to hide the fact that the Nimrodis will soon have another cause for celebration. In that respect she has something in common with both Sara Netanyahu and Kochi Mordechai.

SEVERAL of the guests attending the Nimrodi wedding subsequently moved on to the Tel Aviv Hilton, where a huge tent had been set up inside the ballroom for the annual Purim fancy-dress party hosted by *Yediot Aharon* journalist Mira Avrech.

In keeping with the desert theme, most of the guests who did dress up chose Arab costumes – especially the members of the diplomatic corps. French Ambassador Jean-Noel de Bouillane de Lacoste came so incognito in his keffiyeh, dark glasses and false mustache that he almost escaped recognition.

Avrech, who received the guests in the company of Hilton general manager Ricco de Schepper, protested that the decor was a little too authentic. She was fearful that guests might slip on the straw mats and hurt themselves. As luck would have it, she was the one who slipped – and almost broke her nose.

Her husband, Max Reis, who is recuperating from a back operation, insisted on coming to the ball even though he could not join in the festivities. Instead, clad in Beduin robes, he stayed in their room upstairs, where he was visited by many of the merry-makers.

Amongst the first arrivals in the ballroom were obsessively punctual Agriculture Minister Rafael Eitan and his wife, Ofra Meirson. She wore Beduin robes but he stuck to his blue open-necked shirt – which is what he wears when he goes into the desert.

Tourism Minister Moshe Katsav, who had many engagements that night, came to meet his Mexican counterpart, who had been invited in company with Mexican Ambassador Juan Antonio Mateos Cicero. But there were so many people and the lighting was so dim that they did not find each other.

Former Tel Aviv mayors Shlomo Lahat and Ronni Milo were amongst the latecomers. Having stopped off first at the Nimrodi wedding, they were not attired in accordance with the theme. But Aura Herzog, who heads the Council for a Beautiful Israel, and former Jewish Agency chairman Shmcha Dinitz got into the spirit of the event and looked quite convincing.

WHEN Zvi Mazel, Israel's ambassador to Egypt, decided to come home to celebrate his 60th birthday, he thought it would just be a family affair with his wife, Michelle, his daughters, Iris and Tammy, and his son, Yossi. What he didn't know was that he would have a surprise party organized by the women in his life.

There were 50 guests representing various stations of his life, from his childhood in Bnei Brak, his army days and, of course, his career as a diplomat. To throw him off the scent, there were numerous hints from members of his family about the need to visit Tammy's new apartment in Tel Aviv, which is where he suspected there might be some sort of a party. But first the family would have dinner at the Jerusalem Hilton, where he had been led to believe they would comprise a small and exclusive gathering.

The guests, who had already assembled at the top of the staircase by the time Mazel and his wife arrived, leaned over the balustrade and applauded him as he came into view. His face registered amazement, then broke into a broad grin.

The Mazel offspring had engaged a live band, which played waltzes, tangos, sambas and fox-trots. The guest of honor spent most of the evening on the first floor and looked as if he was enjoying every minute.

A WIZO fashion show featuring the spring/summer collections of Yves Saint Laurent and Christian Lacroix generated a mixed reception. There were ripples of applause for the very French, very chic YSL creations, but Lacroix's shock tactics proved to be a little too much for most of the audience. Many, having made their contribution to WIZO's halfway house for troubled youth over the age of 18, did not bother to stay to the end.

Amongst those who found something to delight them in both collections was high-powered international business broker BatSheva Israel, who always wears sunflower yellow. Her signature color was prominently featured in both collections, which made her journey from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv just that much more worthwhile.

JUST before leaving this week for Spain, the peripatetic Rabbi David Rosen, who heads or is otherwise involved with an ever-increasing number of ecumenical organizations, recalled that when he was chief rabbi of Ireland he once received a letter addressed to the "Chief Rabbit."

Rosen, a vegetarian with a well-developed sense of humor, was not the least bit annoyed. In fact, considering the quantity of lettuce in his diet, he thought it rather appropriate.

PUTTING things back in proportion, former New Yorker Rabbi Emanuel Quint, commenting on the highly vaunted interview that Monica Lewinsky gave to Barbara Walters, said that he couldn't see what the fuss was all about. "After all, it was just two Jewish girls talking to each other..."

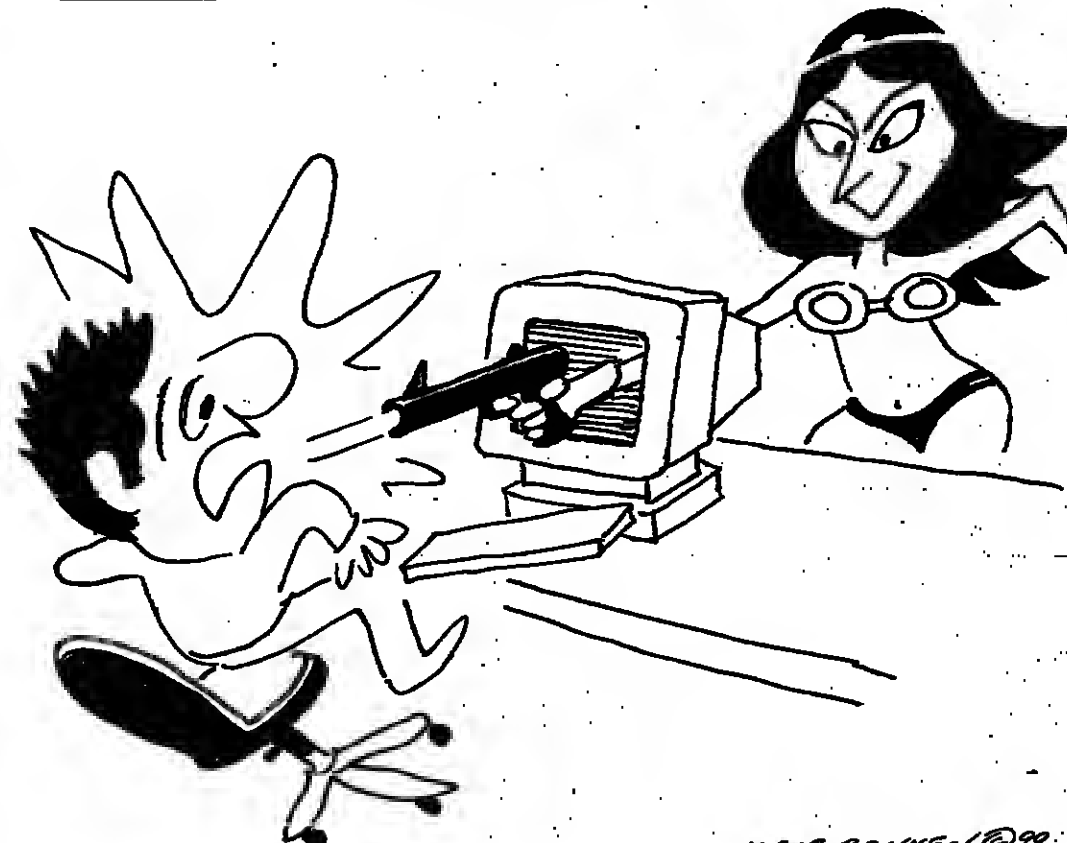
APPEARING recently at ShabbatTarbut, the weekly lecture series sponsored by the Cultural Department of the Jerusalem Municipality, Arye Golan, the early-morning anchorman for Kol Yisrael's Radio 2 was asked whether politicians impose preconditions before agreeing to be interviewed.

The only politician who does, said Golan – in chorus with moderator Elithu Ben-On – is Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi, who gives advance notice of the subjects he doesn't want brought up.

Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon lays down no preconditions, said Golan, but has the neat trick of twisting the conversation to his advantage by saying "the question you should have asked was ..." and then goes on to answer it.

Dressed up for the kill

At the hi-tech successor to the cocktail party, virtual blood flows as easily as champagne once did. Michael Strohm reports



M. BIR ROSEN/99

your computer anywhere?

The answer is simple: speed. "Milliseconds count in these games," says Leo Muraro, a 38-year-old Rockville, Md., ultra-sound technician and LAN party enthusiast. "It's just like the Old West: Whoever has the best aim and the fastest trigger wins."

On the Internet, a player is only as deadly as his modem speed. If an online gamer tries to duel a virtual opponent with a faster connection, he may never see the bullet coming.

Enter the LAN party. Despite the geeky name, the technology is relatively simple. Players install network circuit cards in their computers, which allow them to communicate with their neighbors.

When a roomful of PCs thus equipped are linked with a few feet of cable, virtual bullets careen from one computer to another almost instantaneously.

"It's a beautiful thing, man," gushes one LAN partyer.

But speed isn't the only draw. Gamers say they're willing to lug their computers across town – even across country – because it's more fun to play with people in the flesh. It's a sentiment that flies

'It's like the Old West: Whoever has the best aim and the fastest trigger wins'

- LAN party enthusiast

In the face of a notion, popular among academics, that the Internet has dulled young people's interest in direct social contact.

"THE whole idea of virtual communities stinks," says Omri Rahmat, a digital media analyst in San Rafael, Calif. "There's still no substitute for people getting together. You get to the point where you want to know, 'Who the hell are you? What do you look like?'"

Larry Fox has another take: "In person, you can actually see the look on their face when you blast them!" The 32-year-old software engineer often drives hundreds of kms from his Wilmington, Del., home to attend LAN parties.

At a recent gathering in Philadelphia, Fox met a player who drove from Chicago to participate – and then motored back that very night.

"It's the price of having fun," Fox says, arguing that he's no different from a devoted golfer who lugs his clubs to Pebble Beach or a skier who packs his skis off to Aspen.

The gear LAN partyers assem-

ble at these events is as impressive as their enthusiasm. During full-in-the action, a typical LAN party resembles a muscle car convention – only they talk megahertz instead of turbocargers.

As some of the Mitchellville partygoers dine on TastyCakes and bowls of homemade vegetable chili, others stroll past their neighbors' machines for a peek under the hood.

Many computers on the LAN scene are home-built, super-charged monstrosities designed for 3-D gaming.

Bringing so many power hogs together in one place can occasionally make for trouble. Horror stories about flaming fuse boxes and flickering lights abound. Party veterans frequently tote along emergency power supplies in the event of a blackout.

WITH news of events circulated by word of mouth and the Web, LAN parties are held in venues as small as a bedroom and large as a warehouse – maybe larger. Organizers of Canada's Fragaalooza, a 96-hour orgy of LAN mayhem in Edmonton, Alberta, lease an airplane hangar for 300 attendees.

When gamers gather for larger events, they often bring along their online alter egos.

"Hey, Siren!" That's what people call Amy Brown at LAN parties in Washington, Pittsburgh and Dallas. A 21-year-old college student, Brown says an online alter ego is often easier for other players to recall than a real name. And, like a costume party, it adds a patina of anonymity that preserves killer reputations cultivated online.

"It's common to find people whose online personalities are much different from their off-line personality," says Brown. She's seen 12-year-old half-pints running around LAN parties introducing themselves as DeathKiller.

Other discoveries are less palatable.

"At a LAN party is where you find out that the 19-year-old girl you were talking to is really a 46-year-old man or vice versa," Brown observes.

LAN parties are slowly outgrowing their nerdy origins and attracting a wider audience. Blue's News, an online directory for these events, lists more than 200 LAN parties in places as far afield as Alaska, Poland and Peru. "If you're lucky," one partygoer says, "you'll even get girls to come." (The Baltimore Sun)

Finally, the fear of choosing

Dear Ruthie, I find myself in a dilemma nobody can help me solve. I have been in love with my girlfriend since high school, where we met through a Jewish youth movement. We lived in different parts of the US and were restricted to seeing each other only on school holidays. Then in college, we also ended up having to commute on weekends, because even though we tried, we didn't get accepted to the same schools. Luckily, the commute wasn't so bad – we were only an hour's drive away from one another, and we both had cars.

We remained faithful to each other throughout college, and planned to get married when we graduated. But then suddenly, my girlfriend's mother died, and she went back to live with her father "for a while." Again, though I tried, I didn't manage to get a job near her, so I ended up near my own parents. This left us back where we were in high school – having to see one another infrequently and conducting most of our relationship over the phone.

We were both miserable: always missing each other and trying to figure out how and

when we could finally get married. In the meantime, she completed her master's degree, and her father remarried. Finally, I thought, we could fulfill our 10-year-old dream.

But now she expects me to move to her area, where she wants to do her doctorate. This means that I would have to quit my job and move.

I really don't want to do this. I have a relatively high salary and the chance of promotion. If I left it all now, I would be starting all over again in a new place. Also, my girlfriend can do her doctorate anywhere. But she won't budge.

I don't want to leave everything I have, but I don't want to forfeit my love for this woman. What in the world can I do now?

On Hold
Somewhere in the US

Dear On Hold,
It sounds as though both you and your

girlfriend are so used to this relationship being based – and fed – on separation, that neither of you knows how to handle the possibility of togetherness.

For 10 years you have kept love alive through the tension of constraints. No wonder, then, that the fear of finally doing away with them is looming over your heads. In other words, you're both finding yourselves exposed to the elements and feel as though your raincoats and umbrellas have been forcibly taken away.

Undoubtedly, this is not only true of your relations with one another. This little arrangement has obviously suited both of you nicely where other members of the opposite sex are concerned, as well.

So here you are, not only with the option of finally getting married – which in itself is frightening – but with that of playing the field elsewhere.

If this analysis is daunting, relax. The truth is that you and your girlfriend have had all of the above options open for as

many years as you have known one another. You simply chose not to see or act upon them. The only difference now is that you're suddenly acknowledging their existence.

Your dilemma stems from this acknowledgment. Whereas before you could attribute your predicament to external circumstances, now your problem is internal. Doctoral degrees can be obtained in more places than one. So can jobs. Maybe your real fear at this point comes from the awareness that this applies to lovers too.

The need to make a choice, which always requires forfeiting something, is never easy. In your case, the difficulty is compounded by geography.

Perhaps the only thing you can do to overcome your fear of opting for one thing over another is to believe that no choice is irreversible. And that life, rather than being linear, is actually a series of twists, turns and progression.

Letters should be addressed to: 'Dear Ruthie,' POB 81, Jerusalem 91000. For e-mail: ruthie@jpost.co.il ('Dear Ruthie' also appears in *In Jerusalem* and in *City Lights* on Fridays.)

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Stanley Kubrick: The last odyssey

The man who died still young

The visionary craftsman

By KENNETH TURAN

HOLLYWOOD - First comes the predictable shock: Stanley Kubrick, dead, the youthful creator felled with so much left to do. Then comes a different kind of shock: Stanley Kubrick was 70 years old.

For several interconnecting reasons, Kubrick will always be young in the film world's eyes, the passionate baby auteur who made his first feature, the war-themed *Fear and Desire*, when he was 25 years old. That was back in 1953, when Sundance guru Robert Redford was still in high school, when the idea of young people making movies was a fantasy it would take decades to bring to reality.

But Kubrick, who was a staff photographer for *Look Magazine* when he was 17, had always been a young man in a hurry. If his first two features were uncertain, his third, a race track crime thriller called *The Killing*, crackled with tension and despair.

By the time the 1960s flowered and the French New Wave turned the search for personal filmmakers into a categorical imperative, American critics eager for a hot young director to champion turned around and discovered the intense and bearded Kubrick in their midst.

Between 1957 and 1971, Kubrick ran off a string of six impressive films, intelligent, superbly crafted projects touched with the black humor and pessimism that characterized his work. They made him a role model for directors yearning to work smartly and independently within the studio system.

First came *Paths of Glory*, still considered a classic among anti-war films. Next was *Spencer*, more thoughtful than big-budget Hollywood epics usually were. That was followed by *Lolita*, a sardonic take on the Vladimir Nabokov novel that has dated not at all; the devastating satire *Dr. Strangelove or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*, and two films whose intensity and prescience made them landmarks in their genres: the science fiction *2001: A Space Odyssey* and the grandfather of teen-run-amok dystopian visions, *A Clockwork Orange*.

ALTHOUGH it was not much noticed at the time, in the long run a decision Kubrick made in 1961 had the biggest influence on his subsequent career. Hungry for even more of the kind of independence that today's beginning filmmakers take for granted, Kubrick moved to England, setting up a home and eventually a studio in rural Buckinghamshire.

One reason we think of Kubrick as forever young is that by most measures his best work was finished before he was 45. As his time in England lengthened, his films became fewer, further apart and less satisfying.

Always technically gifted and infatuated with the mechanics of



Kubrick is shown behind the set of 'The Shining.'

filmmaking. Kubrick became increasingly obsessive, worrying about physical details but, some critics claimed, losing touch with film's human dimension.

As critic David Thomson said in reference to 2001, "Kubrick treats computers in the way Sternberg did Dietrich." So 1975's *Barry Lyndon*, Kubrick's first film after *Clockwork Orange*, was more memorable for how the director managed to shoot scenes lit only by candlelight than for anything dramatic. In the 20-plus years since then, only two features, 1980's *The Shining* and 1987's *Full Metal Jacket*, have been released under Kubrick's name.

AS his working pace slowed, Kubrick became increasingly reclusive, so much so that an impostor was able to dine out in London for

some time pretending to all who would listen that he was the great director. Another reason we think of the filmmaker as young and dynamic is that Kubrick strenuously resisted the culture of personality that defines our time. He so completely avoided interviews and photographs that we have not seen him in the public prints; we have no images of him as a graybeard sage to contradict the picture of him as passionate and committed.

Yet just because he was removed did not mean that Kubrick had mellowed. When Warner Bros. was putting together a touring show to commemorate its 75th anniversary, he burnt up the overseas phone lines with specific suggestions about which of his films he wanted shown and how. And when a visiting journalist asked a

London film editor a few years back if Kubrick's latest project, *Eyes Wide Shut*, was in fact a reality, the answer was unequivocal: "Absolutely. They've already started firing people."

That film, starring Nicole Kidman and Tom Cruise and now officially Kubrick's last, was reportedly just finished and finally shown to eager Warner Bros. executives.

Working with a skeleton crew, a tactic which ensured his control and stretched his budget, Kubrick, ever the driven perfectionist, tied up two of Hollywood's biggest stars for more than a year of shooting in an effort to get things exactly right.

With *Eyes Wide Shut* due out later this year, everyone is hoping that this uncompromising man has left us one last gem to savor.

(Los Angeles Times)



Kubrick's 'Full Metal Jacket' - A slap in the face for American myths.

By MATT WOLF

LONDON (AP) - Stanley Kubrick, a visionary craftsman whose films such as *Dr. Strangelove* and *A Clockwork Orange* reflected an icy despairing view of life, died Sunday.

"Stanley Kubrick was the grandmaster of filmmaking. He copied no one, while all of us were scrambling to imitate him," director Steven Spielberg said in a statement released by his office.

At the time of his death, the publicity-shy Kubrick had been preparing for the midyear release of *Eyes Wide Shut*, his first film in over a decade. Starring Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman, the film had been shrouded in the usual secrecy that attended all of Kubrick's later movies.

"He was like family to us, and we are in shock and devastated," Cruise and Kidman said in a statement through their publicist. Typically for Kubrick, the actors had to sign a confidentiality agreement promising not to disclose anything about the long-delayed project.

Hertfordshire police said officers were summoned Sunday afternoon at Kubrick's rural estate, where he was certified dead. "There are no suspicious circumstances," police said.

Kubrick's family simply announced his death, and said there would be no further comment. Kubrick married Suzanne Harlan in 1958, and they had three daughters.

Over a career spanning some four decades, Kubrick worked infrequently but often brilliantly, and was regarded as a maverick talent - to some, a genius - who played by his own rules.

His long ago gained a reputation as a fierce perfectionist who wouldn't do one take if he could do a hundred.

"He gives new meaning to the word 'meticulous,'" Jack Nicholson said after working with Kubrick in *The Shining*. Though he often obtained leading performers, Kubrick's films were rarely an actor's showcase, distinguishing themselves instead by craft, intellect, and painstaking finesse.

"He was at once a visionary, a moralist, and a baroque author," said Gilles Jacob, director of the Cannes Film Festival in France, who said Kubrick's death was "a very hard knock for world cinema."

"Extraordinary, yes. Brilliant, yes. But as a human being - that's the test he doesn't do too well," said Malcolm McDowell, who played the thugish hero, Alex, in Kubrick's most controversial film, *A Clockwork Orange* (1971).

BUT whether chronicling the effects of war in *Fear and Desire* (1953) and *Paths of Glory* (1957) or sending up the suicidal logic of the Cold War in the blackly comic *Dr. Strangelove*, or *How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*



Jack Nicholson in 'The Shining.'

in 1964, Kubrick moved freely between genres - from a tale of sexual obsession with *Lolita* in 1962, based on the Vladimir Nabokov novel, to a nightmarish vision of the future in *A Clockwork Orange*.

In a book newly published in Britain, another British-based American filmmaker, Terry Gilliam (*Brazil*), recounted the impact of *Paths of Glory*, a story of insanity among French troops during World I.

"Suddenly, with *Paths of Glory* there was a movie that was about something - about injustice - with themes and ideas, and the good guys didn't win in the end," said Gilliam. "That film completely changed me."

Common to all Kubrick's work was a cool, icy brilliance that some found too emotionally detached - even as others hailed the director's visual flair.

In *Barry Lyndon* (1975), based on the 19th-century Thackeray novel, Kubrick insisted on shooting by actual candlelight. The result was a film whose rapturous visual sheen got attention and awards even as its stars, Ryan O'Neal and Marisa Berenson, were scarcely mentioned.

Likewise in 2001, the human actors were upstaged by Hal, the devious computer.

ADAPTING Stephen King's thriller *The Shining* for the screen in 1978, Kubrick made that rare horror film that was all the more disturbing for taking place largely in bright light. Nicholson's leering

smile as he bashes through a door was one of the defining film images of the decade.

Kubrick was born July 26, 1928, in New York City.

At age 17, he was hired as a staff photographer by *Look* magazine, which had been impressed by a picture of a news dealer Kubrick had snapped on the day President Franklin D. Roosevelt died.

While working at *Look*, he studied film by attending screenings at the Museum of Modern Art. "I was aware that I didn't know anything about making films, but I believed I couldn't make them any worse than the majority of films I was seeing. Bad films gave me the courage to try making a movie," Kubrick once said.

2001: *A Space Odyssey*, with its dazzling visual imagery and inspired use of music, proved to be a great success, and Kubrick got the second of his four Academy Award nominations for best director. (The others were for *Dr. Strangelove*, *Barry Lyndon*, and *A Clockwork Orange*, also nominated for best picture.)

A Clockwork Orange, set in a violent future, was one of Kubrick's most provocative films and was disparaged by Anthony Burgess, who accused Kubrick of turning his novelistic study of free will into a wallow in violence.

Controversy about *A Clockwork Orange* moved Kubrick to withdraw the film from circulation in Britain. But one could argue that *Clockwork Orange* was consistent with the vision of all Kubrick's work. (AP)

Film unions honor their own

By MICHAEL FLEEMAN

LOS ANGELES - An exuberant Roberto Benigni captured a lead actor prize for *Life Is Beautiful* and Gwyneth Paltrow took home an actress award that she dedicated to her mother at the Screen Actors Guild awards. Robert Duvall and Kathy Bates also received honors.

Benigni, the Italian director-actor-writer who created the comic-tragic story of a father trying to shield his son from the horrors of Holocaust, lifted award presenter Helen Hunt and spun her around, then said in broken English he was so happy that "every organ of my body is moving in a very bad way."

Paltrow, awarded for her role as the heiress who falls in love with a young William Shakespeare in *Shakespeare in Love*, paid tribute to her mother Blythe Danner as "the most brilliant, beautiful, profound actress I know" and dedicated the award to her. Paltrow also won a Golden Globe and *Shakespeare in Love* won the ensemble acting prize for a film.

In other film categories, Bates, the politically savvy campaign troubleshooter in *Primary Colors*, and Duvall, the tough, baseball-loving corporate attorney in *A Civil Action*, won awards.

"I'm just thrilled, absolutely thrilled," supporting-actress winner Bates said backstage, making no secret of her desire to go on to win an Academy Award on March 21 for the same role. "It's been on my mind ever since the nomination."

Although the SAG awards, which honor actors in both film and television, are only in their fifth year, they are becoming a strong predictor of Oscar winners because of a significant overlap of the membership of the actors' union and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Last year, four of those receiving SAG awards went on to pick up Oscars: Jack Nicholson, Helen Hunt, Robin Williams and Kim



Kirk Douglas - still ready to mix it

Basinger. Two years ago, three of four SAG winners picked up Oscars.

In the guild's television categories, Sam Waterston won for lead actor in a drama series for *Law and Order*, Julianna Margulies picked up her second prize for actress in a drama for *ER*, while the ensemble prize for drama went to the cast of *ER*, its fourth award in the five years the show has been on the air.

The ensemble award for comedy was given to the cast of *Ally McBeal*. Michael J. Fox picked up an award for actor in a comedy series for *Spin City* and Christopher Reeve won for actor in a TV movie or miniseries for *Rear Window*. Kirk Douglas was given the guild's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Within the same context Steven Spielberg won the Directors Guild of America's award for *Saving Private Ryan*, making him and the epic World War II film strong

favorites for Academy Awards.

IN voting by the union for filmmakers, Spielberg defeated Roberto Benigni of *Life Is Beautiful*, John Madden of *Shakespeare in Love*, Terrence Malick of *The Thin Red Line*, and Peter Weir of *The Truman Show*. He dedicated the award to his father, Arnold Spielberg, and his father's World War II generation.

Spielberg noted that all five directors were nominated for both DGA awards and Academy Awards, and three for making films about the World War II era.

"People are finding ways of embracing history," he said in accepting the award Saturday. *Saving Private Ryan*, which follows a squad of soldiers sent to find a private whose brothers were killed in the war, was nominated for 11 Academy Awards, second only to *Shakespeare in Love*, with 13. (AP)

They all sure did it with 'Cosi'

Concert Roundup

Everything is up to snuff in the New Israeli Opera (NIO) production of Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. Two pairs of soloists: soprano Marina Levit (Fioriligi) and tenor Geoffrey Francis (Ferrando), mezzo-soprano Hadar Halevi De Vito (Dorabella) and

baritone Pietro Spagnoli (Guglielmo) offer a vivid performance both in solo parts and in exceptionally well-balanced ensembles.

Two of the cast deserve special praise for their infallible sense of opera buffa. The solid British baritone William Shimmet makes sort of a kind devil of the old prankster Don Alfonso, who dispenses wisdom to naive lovers. Young Israeli soprano Anat Efraim almost steals the show as the clever maid Despina. She emerges as wonderful singing actress, with the exact body language - her movements are musical and at the same time very plebeian.

But in many ways this was the conductor's evening - a Tel Aviv audience doesn't often applaud enthusiastically right after the overture. French maestro Frederic Chaslin demonstrates a deep knowledge and understanding of the music; conducting with perfect tact, he not only supports the singers on the stage, rather he tells this fable, following the most subtle turns and bends of Mozart's score, revealing its ever-changing mood, from mysterious uncertainty

to irony to rejoicing. And under Chaslin's soft hands the Rishon LeZion orchestra in the pit make marvels and plays with deep and rich sonority.

Jonathan Miller's direction is dynamic and clear without being simplistic, the symmetrical set (with its truncated statues and classical fragments) slyly hints at the odd gender conflicts of this tale, the costumes by Sue Blanc are colorful and the lighting designer Avi-Yona Bueno (Bambi) in an almost imperceptible way reminds you it takes only from dawn to dusk to learn the nature of love.

Who could ask for more? Maxim Reider

Alexander Korsantiya and Friends
TAPAC
March 4

The Israel Sinfonietta
Uri Mayer, conductor
Margarita De Arellano, soprano
Works by Donizetti and Mozart
Beersheba Conservatory, March 6

Margarita De Arellano arrived on short notice to fill in for ailing Nora Amselem and presented the scheduled program with poise. De Arellano's ability to stretch a phrase with expressive sensitivity to the text and perfect intonation

bespeaks authentic musicality in arias from *Don Pasquale* and *L'Elisir d'Amore*.

Mozart's motet *Exsultate, Jubilate*, K.165, was likewise projected effectively, without striving for a particular stylistic definition. Her voice is darkly covered, rounded in tone and modest in size - drawing the ear rather than reaching out to the listener.

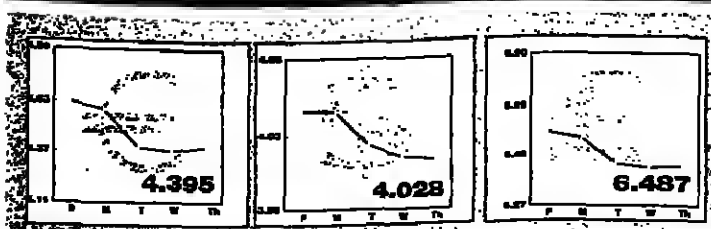
Maestro Uri Mayer found continuity in Mozart's G minor Symphony, No. 40, a modern-styled performance, without too much fussing for sentiment. His tempi were based on a steady beat or "tactus" that drew a line of continuity throughout the entire work, drawing its rhythmic structure together under one roof, so to speak. The Sinfonietta responded with warmth of tone, technically a hit raggy. Max Stern

In Tune and Theater reviews will appear tomorrow.

AACI Jerusalem Region invites you to attend its Annual Membership Meeting Thursday, March 11, 1999 at 7:30 p.m. Tirat Bat Sheva Hotel Guest Speaker: MK Yuli Edelstein For details call 02-561-7151 Admission free - refreshments served

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Today's shekel



In brief

'98 industrial exports up 11%

Industrial exports, excluding diamonds, rose last year by 11 percent in constant terms, the Trade and Industry Ministry yesterday said. The Central Bureau of Statistics, which has yet to furnish its own industrial export figures for last year, said last week that between November and January industrial exports rose 5% in comparison with the previous three months. According to yesterday's government data exports rose 8%, while benefiting from a 3.1% decline in prices. In 1997, industrial exports rose 13.5% in comparison with 1996. *Jerusalem Post Staff*

Formula Ventures to raise another \$40m.

Formula Ventures intends to raise another \$40 million from institutional investors in Israel and Europe for investment in Israeli hi-tech companies. Formula Ventures, which was established by software company Formula Systems, focuses on early stage information technology companies. The fund has already raised \$25m. from a group of investors including Shamrock Holdings, Yozma II Venture Capital, Poalim Capital Markets, and the Ofer Brothers. The extra money would be raised by Nessuah-Zanex, which will hold a number of road shows in an attempt to attract investors. The fund has invested in eight companies so far. *Dan Gerstenfeld*

Propper: Ports' strike jamming \$490m. in goods

Jerusalem Post Staff

Some \$490 million worth of goods are stranded at the country's ports due to the ongoing strike waged by the Histadrut. Manufacturers Association President Dan Propper said yesterday.

The Port Authority and its employees were scheduled to meet again last night in yet another attempt to end the strike. Sources close to the talks said chances were good the week-long strike would end this week.

Meanwhile, the Chamber of Shipping, in an emergency meeting, called on owners of ships currently stranded in Israeli ports to sail to neighboring ports.

Propper said the direct and indirect damage wrought by the strikers on the economy is "intolerable," and called on the parties to end it at once.

In a personal letter to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu Propper said the government's silence so far in the face of the strike was "regrettable," at a time "when one of the economy's most

indispensable infrastructures is being damaged."

Propper suggested that as a long-term remedy the Port Authority Law be changed so that the sea ports would be privatized "in the spirit of the government's policy."

Chambers of Commerce President Dan Gillerman warned the strike's organizers that his organization will sue them personally for what he assesses as NIS 30 million in daily damages.

Gillerman said that some of the stranded ships turned away to such neighboring ports as Larnaca, Alexandria and Piraeus, in a move which will ultimately cost local importers dearly due to the storage costs imposed on them as a result of this diversion.

Trade and Industry Minister Natan Sharansky also called on Netanyahu to help end the strike. "It is no secret," wrote Sharansky, "that foreign trade is the locomotive of Israel's economy and that this strike is inflicting great damage both on importers and on consumers."

Hapoalim finishes 1st phase in private-banking establishment

By DAN GERSTENFELD

Bank Hapoalim has completed the first stage of establishing its private-banking unit and is about to start a public campaign to get new clients, the bank announced yesterday.

The move, which started in November 1995, was recently completed with the opening of 50 private banking centers across the country. These centers serve old Hapoalim clients who were moved from their branches to the new centers.

Amnon Herzog, Hapoalim's executive vice president and head of private banking, said that the bank intends to launch a media campaign aimed at attracting new customers.

The establishment of the private banking unit is part of the bank's strategic plan and all other leading banks have already moved in the same direction, which is more client oriented.

The private banking units operate as part of existing branches but are aimed at clients with more than NIS 300,000 in their accounts, who are considered by the bank to have growth potential. These clients, who represent only 3 percent of Hapoalim's customers, account for some 25% of the bank's credit activity, excluding big companies. In addition, the equity holdings of these clients represent some 30% of the bank's equity activity. The average portfolio of such a client is close to NIS 1 million.

In largest-ever local buyout

New Dimension sold at \$650m. to Houston firm BMC Software

By NICKY BLACKBURN

BMC Software, a systems-management solutions provider based in Houston, Texas, has bought Tel Aviv-based New Dimension Software, a specialist in enterprise management, for more than \$650 million in cash, making it the largest deal of its kind in Israel's history, New Dimension said yesterday.

New Dimension, which is traded on NASDAQ and saw sales of \$93.6m. in 1998, signed a share purchase and tender agreement to be acquired by BMC, the world's 12th largest independent software vendor, at a price of \$52.50 per share.

At present about 40 percent of the stock is owned by the public, while the rest is owned by three people: Yosi Hollander, the former CEO and founder who is involved in

legal action with the company over an unlawful dismissal claim; Roni Ainev and Dalia Prashker.

The acquisition complements BMC's pending merger with Boole & Babbage, the exclusive European distributor of New Dimension's products. This merger is expected to be completed by March 30.

BMC, the industry leader in delivering application service assurance solutions, expects in the wake of its latest acquisition to gain a major center for software development and a significant presence in Israel. The company also became a major player in the enterprise management industry.

"The acquisition of New Dimension is a perfect fit for BMC Software's global strategy of providing application service solutions from the back office to the front office and beyond," said Max

Watson, chairman, president and CEO of BMC.

"Today there is already a high degree of product integration between the companies which is good for our customers who gain focused, best-of-breed solutions that address their critical issues. This combination establishes a new center for technology, building on strong skills and resources in Israel."

BMC would be joining a number of leading hi-tech companies, such as IBM, Intel and Microsoft, that have already established significant operations in Israel, added Watson. He said the company plans to maintain and expand New Dimension's Israeli operations.

For New Dimension the buyout offers an opening into the European market and the chance to exploit BMC's sales and mar-

keting expertise.

Dan Bamez, president and CEO of New Dimension, who will remain in his position, said the deal is a win-win situation for everyone involved - the two companies, the customers and the industry as a whole.

However, according to Solid Capital Investments analyst Israel Gersh, the purchase price of New Dimension was too low. His target price was \$60 a share for the next 12 months.

"It's not a bargain price, though there's not a lot of premium on the deal," he said. "New Dimension is a good company and it's doing very well in the US and will do well in Europe in the following years. It has lots of room to grow. In the long term the company could have done better."

Gersh believes New Dimension

decided to sell to BMC because it was looking for an entry into the European market.

Under the terms of the agreement, BMC anticipates absorbing an in-process R&D charge of up to 30% of the purchase price, with amortization of identifiable intangible assets over four to five years.

The company has entered into option agreements with two holders of more than 60% of the outstanding shares at the tender offer price.

Bill Austin, senior vice president and CEO of BMC Software, said the company is paying in cash because it believes its stock is greatly undervalued.

Once the New Dimension and Boole & Babbage transactions are completed, BMC will employ about 5,000 people in 26 countries and annual revenues will add up to some \$1.4 billion.

BVR wins \$23m. deal

By DAN GERSTENFELD

BVR Systems yesterday won a \$23 million contract from an unspecified NATO member, for the supply of Emd simulation systems, the company yesterday said.

The Givatayim-based firm said that the supply of the systems will be completed within two years. As part of the agreement BVR will supply its client with airborne pods carried by combat aircraft, ground-debriefing stations, real time tracking positioning equipment and other related services.

Five other NATO members have already acquired similar systems from BVR.

Aviv Tzidon BVR's president and CEO said in a statement that the company won the tender despite that all of its major competitors were also bidding for it. He added that the 5th generation of the Emd system is expected to be chosen also by other countries.

Tzidon said that the winning of the tender will contribute significantly to the company's backlog, which is expected to reach a minimum of \$60m. by the end of the first quarter.

Earlier this month BVR announced that it had won a contract for the supply of range-less systems to the American air-force in Europe for \$3m.

Ehud airborne pods are housed in training air-to-air missile shells adaptable to any type of combat aircraft. The system provides real-time missile simulation and assessment.

BVR systems was established as a result of the spin-off of all defense-related business from BVR Technologies, which develops training and computer based simulation systems. The company offers solutions to the simulation, training and debriefing needs of modern air, sea and ground forces.

LONDON (Reuters) - Take a consumer product like Madonna's newest CD, reprice it from a European national currency into the new euro and a funny thing happens. Those key price levels that sup-



Intel CEO Craig Barrett, shown here in a file photo, has called the compromise between his company and the US government 'a win-win for both sides.'

Intel, US regulators settle antitrust case

By ANNE MARIE SQUEO and JAMES ROWLEY

WASHINGTON (Bloomberg) - Intel Corp. reached agreement with staff attorneys at the US Federal Trade Commission to settle antitrust charges against the world's largest computer chip maker.

The agreement, which avoids a likely three-month trial that was to start today, still must be approved by the four FTC commissioners who voted last June to file antitrust charges against Intel. The commission usually accepts its staff recommendations.

Attorneys for both sides filed a joint motion seeking to withdraw the case, after negotiating a settlement over the weekend. Details about the settlement weren't immediately available, and no date has been set for the commission vote.

"If approved by the commission, the proposed

settlement being recommended by complaint counsel and Intel would resolve the allegations contained in the commission's complaint issued on June 8," said William Baer, director of the FTC's Bureau of Competition.

Intel president and chief executive Craig Barrett called the compromise a "win-win" for both sides. "We are satisfied that the agreement gives us value for our intellectual property rights," he said.

Shares of Intel rose 3 to 117 5/8 at the opening of US trading on the Nasdaq Stock Market. Last June, the FTC accused Intel of punishing its customers - computer equipment makers - by withholding technical data they needed to make products that run on Intel's Pentium microprocessors. Intel retaliated after the companies said Intel violated patents on their technologies, the FTC says. Intel argued it was acting within its rights

when it refused to provide technical data to computer makers that had pressed claims of patent infringement.

The FTC was expected to seek an administrative order to bar Intel from retaliating against customers asserting patent rights against it.

The FTC's case turned on whether it could prove Intel was a monopolist forbidden under antitrust laws from refusing to deal with individual customers. The FTC alleged Intel abused its monopoly by withholding key technical information from Intergraph Corp., Compaq Computer Corp., and Digital Equipment Corp., now part of Compaq.

"Intel's purpose in each case was to use its monopoly muscle to pressure the customer to grant to Intel a license for microprocessor-related technology developed and owned by the customer," the FTC charged in a recent filing.

Repricing the euro to look right

posedly push consumers to open their wallets - 25.95 German marks, 44.95 guilders, 14.99 pence, or a nice even 148 French francs - are suddenly gone.

What's left are odd euro prices

like 13.27 in Frankfurt, 20.40 in Amsterdam, 19.03 in Dublin, or 22.56 in Paris.

Retailers and consumer goods companies know this as the "price points" issue, and it is one of the

trickiest bits of a massive euro repricing process getting under way ahead of the scheduled January 2002 launch of euro coins and notes. Whether it's pop CDs or breakfast cereal, businesses across Europe are wrestling with the question of how to reprice their products for the euro both profitably and equitably.

At the root of the issue is the conviction among marketing experts, based on much research, that price points matter.

Indeed, Britain's Chartered Institute of Marketing said 64 percent of all retail prices end in the numeral nine.

"Consumers automatically think in terms of tens. So if something is priced at nine, it registers subconsciously that they're getting a bit of a discount. That's the theory," said institute spokesperson Claire Forbes.

People understand and expect such prices. Do away with them and confusion results, which is the last thing businesses want to stir during the already confusing euro transition.

"People know what 9.99 is, but if you convert to euros they haven't got a clue," said Chris Dawson, director of the London retail consultancy Management Horizons Europe.

To hit the right price points after conversion, businesses said their first approach will be to round off euro prices. But the key question is in which direction - up or down? Rounding up may pad profits, but could infuriate increasingly savvy consumers, while rounding down could hurt profits, but win market share by underpricing rivals.

For instance, Madonna's CD costs £11.99 at many British record

stores - that's 17.56 euros. If Britain joins the euro zone, those stores may be tempted to round up the price to say, 17.59, and skim three euro cents of extra profit. But with competing shops just down the street, stores may fear being undercut and so round down the CD's price to 17.50 or 17.49, handing the consumer a windfall discount.

European consumers are perplexed by and somewhat suspicious of the euro, according to a recent survey. The poll of 1,000 shoppers in five major cities by the retail consultancy European Insight Group found some fearful of abuses by retailers.

The Irish were the most afraid the euro would cause creeping price inflation (44 percent), with French and British views more mixed, according to the survey conducted on the streets of Paris, Dublin, Milan, Hamburg, and London.

Majorities in all five cities said they do not expect to get "better value for the money" under euro pricing - an attitude retailers said they hope to overcome before 2002.

"Consumers are right to be a little bit sceptical and consumers generally have become a little bit more demanding. But retailing is more competitive than ever before... So the opportunities for retailers to raise prices are fewer," said Richard Hyman, chairman of the London retail consultancy Verdict.

Aside from rounding, another option exists for firms whose products - unlike a Madonna CD - can change from market to market. Item sizes and packaging, of food or drinks especially, could be altered to protect price points, profits and market share.

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OPEC cut-talk boosts oil • Shekel recovery continues

SHARES

TEL AVIV
TASE stocks were mixed as investors sold Bank Leumi and other bank shares that have led the benchmark index's near 12 percent gain over the last two weeks.

The Maof Index fell 0.02% to 344.14 after rising 3.05% on Sunday. It has risen 11.9% in the past 10 trading days.
Bank Leumi fell 1.62% to NIS 6.88. The country's second-largest bank rose 16.4% in the last two weeks. Analysts said investors were selling their shares to benefit from the high price. The No. 1 bank, Bank Hapoalim, fell 0.33% to NIS 4.20. Koor rose 0.48% to NIS 420. Bank Hapoalim may swap its 25% stake in Ampal-American Israel Corp. for a 20% holding in the Radisson Mariah Hotels chain and real estate holdings, held by Koor, Globes reported.

Bank Hapoalim is negotiating to sell its stakes in Ampal and Poalim Investments, another investment company, to comply with a law requiring it to reduce its holdings in non-banking assets. The bank is considering the swap after Koor, which agreed to buy 46% of the hotel chain from Ampal for \$81.5 million, asked the bank to join it as a partner in the hotel chain, said Koor President Danny Biran.

Cla Industries and Investments rose 0.95% to NIS 21.30. The holding company has a stake in ECI Telecom, the country's largest telecommunications equipment maker, which gained more than 6.4% in the US on Thursday and Friday.

EUROPE

European stocks closed mixed yesterday, undercut by Wall Street as the Dow retreated from the prospect of hitting the magic 10,000

level.
In currencies, receding expectations of imminently higher US interest rates forced the dollar to surrender some ground versus the euro and yen.

By the time European trading drew to a close the Dow was down around 40 points or 0.4% at 9,700 and dealers said Wall Street would remain cautious ahead of a speech by Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan.

In London the blue chip FTSE 100 index closed little changed after a mixed and directionless session, as investors marked time ahead of the presentation of the UK budget today.

The FTSE ended just 3.3 points or 0.05% higher at 6,208.8, after swinging back and forth in a trading range of 60 points.
Investors expect Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown to unveil a fiscally neutral budget, dealers said.

In Frankfurt Germany's Xetra DAX fell as concern over the economy and the effects of the government's tax plan on corporate earnings dampened investors' appetite.
The Xetra DAX finished the day down 1.02% to 4,791.43 points. Its floor-traded counterpart dropped 1.04% to 4,788.69 points.

German utility groups renewed attacks at the weekend over tax reform proposals they say would cost them millions of marks.

The remarks come as the companies, which include RWE AG and Veba AG, prepared to meet Chancellor Gerhard Schröder on Tuesday to discuss the tax plan.

RWE shares lost more than two percent, while Veba lost 1.6%. But Siemens AG led decliners to close down 2.8% to 57.70 euro after it disclosed details of a \$1 billion plan to expand its data network business in the United States.

On the Paris bourse too the lead-

ing CAC 40 index finished with a loss. Sentiment was dulled towards the close as US stocks slipped. The CAC closed down 13.59 points, or 0.32%, at 4,175.97.

ASIA

Japanese stocks were mixed. Declines were led by Yamanouchi Pharmaceutical Co. and other drug-makers, which surged last week as investors sought companies less affected by the recession.
Bridgestone Corp. led gains by exporters on signs of strong US growth.

The benchmark Nikkei 225 stock average fell 11.95, or 0.8%, to 14,779.05. Earlier, it extended Friday's 5% gain, reaching as high as 15,116.10. The broader Topix index rose 0.1% to 11,477.75. Yamanouchi declined as domestic investors tried to realize gains before year-end book closing on March 31. The Tokyo pharmaceuticals index gained 5% in the previous three days.

Australia's All Ordinaries Index rose 0.9% as Telstra Corp. gained ahead of its first-half earnings. Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index rose 0.2% led by Hong Kong Telecommunications Ltd. on its alliance with Microsoft.

WALL STREET

Stocks were mixed yesterday as investors cashed in some profits after nudging the Dow Jones industrial average closer last week to the 10,000 milestone.

Based on early, unofficial data, the Dow ended down 8.47 points at 9,727.61. Last week, it leaped 429 points and set a record close of 9,736.08 on Friday on news that hourly wages were subdued last month, despite a tight labor market.

The technology-laced Nasdaq composite index jumped 60.51 points, or 2.5 percent, to 2,397.62 in a rally fueled by Intel Corp.

TRADING FLOORS

Maof 344.14 ▼ 0.02%
Dow Jones 9727.6 ▼ 0.09%
FTSE 6208.8 ▲ 0.05%
Nikkei 14779.05 ▼ 0.8%

In the broader market, declining issues led advances 15 to 13 on active volume of 709 million shares on the New York Stock Exchange.
The market soared late last week on Wall Street speculation that February's same jobs report had, for the time being, reduced chances that the Federal Reserve would raise interest rates.

Belgian-Dutch financial services group Fortis agreed to pay \$2.8 billion, or \$55 a share, for American Bankers Insurance Group Inc. a Miami-based insurer. ABI's shares were up 5 1/16 at 52 1/16.

The Labor Department also said non-farm payrolls jobs increased 275,000 last month after a 217,000 gain in January.

The jobs report rose to 4.4 percent from 4.3 percent in the prior month.
The jobs report contained no big surprises. Investors cheered the good news that wage increases are still subdued despite the tight labor market. Average hourly wages inched up to \$13.04 in February from \$13.03.

The technology sector got a boost from news early yesterday that Intel Corp. and the Federal Trade Commission staff had

agreed on an antitrust accord, a day before the computer chip giant was to go on trial.

The government had accused Intel of using its dominance in making chips at the heart of most personal computers to bully its competitors and stifle innovation. Intel rose 5 to 119-5/8.

Among the other winners, Dell Computer rose 2 3/8 to 45-3/8. Cisco Systems was up 3-1/16 at 104-9/16 and Microsoft gained 4-1/16 at 159.

The Standard and Poor's 500 rose 7.26 to 1,282.73, and the technology-heavy Nasdaq composite index was up 60.51 at 2,397.62.

Declining issues outnumbered advances by a 6-to-5 margin on the New York Stock Exchange, with 1,368 up, 1,638 down and 561 unchanged.

NYSE volume totaled 705 million shares as of 4 p.m., vs. 828 million in the previous session.

The NYSE composite index rose 0.90 to 604.10, and the American Stock Exchange composite index rose 4.77 to 712.18.

The Russell 2000 index of small-cap companies rose 2.05 to 400.05.

CURRENCIES

The shekel continued to appreciate yesterday gaining another 0.07% against the dollar.

The representative rate for the dollar was fixed at NIS 4.028, the lowest level since September, when the shekel depreciated sharply against the US currency.

The shekel has already recovered 8.3% since it fell to an all-time low of NIS 4.354 per dollar last October.

Elsewhere in currency trading the dollar declined for a second day against the yen on concern Japanese exporters will take advantage of the dollar's 2.5 per-

cent gain last week and bring overseas earnings home by selling dollars for yen.

The US currency fell to 121.71 yen from 122.72 late Friday in New York. It weakened to \$1.0891 per euro from \$1.0823 on expectations the European Central Bank won't soon cut interest rates and that it won't tolerate a continuing slump in the euro, which is down 6.6% since its January 1 introduction.

COMMODITIES

METALS

Gold rallied into a wave of selling at \$290.00 an ounce in late European business yesterday, although dealers said they saw further upside tests ahead.

Gold's rise came with the start of US trade after prices had ticked gently upwards through the European morning.

London gold fixed at \$289.50 a troy ounce in the afternoon, a dollar up on the morning's fix.

Prudential-Bache Minerals Strategist Ted Arnold said gold would trade in a range of \$305.00 to \$275.00 during the first six months of the year.

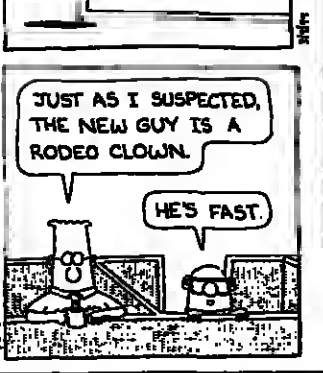
Spot gold was last at \$289.10/\$289.60 versus Friday's New York close of \$287.90/\$288.40. Silver prices also rose through European business, adding several cents to reverse last week's steady losses.

ENERGY

Crude oil for April delivery rose as much as 59 cents, or 4.4%, to \$13.89 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange after Saudi Arabia and Iran said in a joint statement that oil supplies needed to be cut further to end a world oil glut. The statement, reported by the official Saudi Press Agency,

DILBERT

By Scott Adams



could signal that the two countries are putting aside differences that have prevented the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries from taking greater steps to lift oil prices that fell to a 12-year low in December. The statement comes before OPEC's March 23 meeting in Vienna.

(News agencies)

Alcatel stages comeback with Net acquisition spree

PARIS (Bloomberg) — Alcatel SA chief executive Serge Tchuruk insisted investors had overdone it when they drove shares of Europe's No. 2 phone-equipment maker down 38 percent in one day after a profit warning last September.

Now he's showing them why. Tchuruk, 61, moved Alcatel firmly into the fast-growing market for Internet equipment last week, snapping up two US technology companies. Shares of the Paris-based company surged 24% in four days in response to the acquisitions, adding 4.2 billion euros to its market value.

"Alcatel's shares are now prepared for a comeback," said Jean-Pierre Viteaux, of BBL Asset Management in Paris.

Investors said Alcatel's stock is poised to rise further as the purchases enable the company to shift away from its stagnating voice businesses, win new clients, and boost earnings.

Last Tuesday, Alcatel offered \$2

billion, or \$37 a share, for the data-networking company Xylan Corp., based in Calabasas, California. It followed that Thursday with a \$350 million offer for closely held, Milpitas, California-based Assured Access Technology Inc.

The company also bought closely held computer-networking company Packet Engines Inc., in Spokane, Washington, for \$315 million in cash last December, as well as DSC Communications Corp. of Plano, Texas, in September for \$4.4 billion in stock.

"Very rapidly, we've managed to fill the holes in our product line and we'll soon offer one of the most complete ranges of phone equipment available," an upbeat Tchuruk said.

The company has come a long way since last September, when it stunned investors by saying it would fail to meet 1998 earnings expectations because of weak demand for its traditional voice

equipment.
The warning highlighted just how far behind Alcatel was then in the race to provide new equipment to handle data, even as it emerged from a three-year reorganization which should have sharpened its focus on the fastest growing markets.

Alcatel's shares plunged, hitting a 20-month low of 68.14 euros on October 2. This year, the stock had fallen as much as 12%, making it one of the cheapest stocks in the phone-equipment industry.

Even after last week's rise, the shares still trade at 29.5 times estimated 1999 per-share earnings, analysts said, compared with an industry average of 33.4 times. Lucent, the No. 1 phone-equipment maker, trades at about 47.5 times.

Alcatel's 14.9% gain since the beginning of the year still lags the 21.6% gain in the Bloomberg

MARKETWATCH

By Melissa Poyzner

European phone-equipment index. Last week's acquisitions now give Alcatel the ammunition it needs to take on its higher North American rivals, such as Lucent, and complete a transition into a full-fledged telecommunications company begun when Tchuruk arrived four years ago.

"Xylan gets Alcatel back into the game for the highest growth segment of the market," said Stephen Koffler, an analyst at Donaldson Lufkin & Jenrette, referring to the data-networking market, which is growing at least twice as fast as demand for voice equipment.

Tchuruk, who had built up a reputation as a turnaround man at French chemicals company Rhone-Poulenc SA and oil company Total SA, is likely to give

investors more of an insight into Alcatel's recovery on Thursday, when Alcatel presents its definitive 1998 earnings to analysts and journalists.

On January 28, Alcatel indicated second-half profit from operations rose 7.7% to 4.2 billion francs before a charge to slash costs and cut jobs. This year, it said profit at its telecommunications unit should grow by 40%, similar to 1998, as sales rise at least 10%.

Under his belt, Tchuruk now has four important acquisitions in the US, which has become Alcatel's biggest market, accounting for a fifth of sales.

Still, analysts said Tchuruk must prove that amid Alcatel's acquisition spree the company hasn't stopped working to cut costs and turn around its problem units.

In the telecommunications industry's other major market — mobile equipment — Alcatel still lags. Its cellular infrastructure division lost an estimated 1 billion francs last year, when it was supposed to have

returned to break even.

A recent alliance with Motorola Corp. of the US gives Alcatel a fuller line of products for the US market, but that only goes part way to remedy the problem, analysts said.

That's because Alcatel stopped short of cooperating with the US company in the market for equipment that uses a technology called "global systems for mobile communications." GSM is used throughout Europe, where Alcatel faces competition from Ericsson AB of Sweden and Nokia Oyj of Finland. Becoming stronger in that market is key for Alcatel to make its cell-phone unit profitable, analysts said.

That's got some Alcatel watchers concerned the company won't reach its target for an 8% operating profit at its telecommunications division in 2000.

"We are concerned the maintenance of management's 8% target lays Alcatel's shares open to further disappointment," said ana-

lysts at Morgan Stanley Dean Witter in a recent note to investors, who forecast a margin of 6.3 percent for 2000.

Even in the Internet market, analysts said Alcatel must quickly integrate its new additions and start selling a full range of products to stem further market loss to rivals. The longer it takes, the more risk there is even its closest clients will turn to others for the equipment they need.

In terms of time to market, Alcatel is still far behind," said Adnan Ahmad, an analyst at Merrill Lynch, which has a "neutral" rating on the stock.

Just two weeks ago, France Telecom SA, traditionally one of Alcatel's biggest clients, announced an agreement with No. 1 networking company Cisco Systems Inc. for its latest data switches, analysts said.

"Let's see what happens and how they get these companies integrated — if they start winning customers, then we can turn positive," Ahmad said.

FINANCIAL MARKETS

TEL-AVIV 100

ENDING SHARES

LAST CHANGE

Advanced Technology Ltd.	180.00	-0.2
Alcatel Ltd.	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (1998)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (1999)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2000)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2001)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2002)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2003)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2004)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2005)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2006)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2007)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2008)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2009)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2010)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2011)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2012)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2013)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2014)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2015)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2016)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2017)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2018)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2019)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2020)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2021)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2022)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2023)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2024)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2025)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2026)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2027)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2028)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2029)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2030)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2031)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2032)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2033)	344.14	-0.02
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Alcatel Ltd. (2035)	344.14	-0.02
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Alcatel Ltd. (2037)	344.14	-0.02
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Alcatel Ltd. (2041)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2042)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2043)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2044)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2045)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2046)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2047)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2048)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2049)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2050)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2051)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2052)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2053)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2054)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2055)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2056)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2057)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2058)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2059)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2060)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2061)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2062)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2063)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2064)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2065)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2066)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2067)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2068)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2069)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2070)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2071)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2072)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2073)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2074)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2075)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2076)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2077)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2078)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2079)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2080)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2081)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2082)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2083)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2084)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2085)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2086)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2087)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2088)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2089)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2090)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2091)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2092)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2093)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2094)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2095)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2096)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2097)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2098)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2099)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2100)	344.14	-0.02

RETZER

SMALL CAPITALIZATION

TASE ISSUES

Alcatel Ltd.	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (1998)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (1999)	344.14	-0.02
Alcatel Ltd. (2000)	344.14	-0.02

Looking for the next Microsoft

Professional stock-pickers target potential successors to the high-flyers of the 1990s

By PHIL SERAFINO

NEW YORK — Picking the next Microsoft Corp. or Dell Computer Corp. out of the more than 7,000 US public companies is next to impossible. That doesn't stop anyone from trying.

The search for the next big winner has taken on more urgency recently. The leading computer-industry companies — always richly priced — look especially expensive now that they have led the market higher for four years, and some analysts say long-term growth has to slow down.

That could be disappointing for holders of Microsoft, Dell, Intel Corp. and Cisco Systems Inc., who are used to stellar returns fueled by "consistent, rapid growth," said James D. Oberweis, president of Oberweis Asset Management Inc. in North Aurora, Illinois.

The following is a look at potential successors to the high-flyers of the 1990s from some professional stock-pickers. They include Internet access provider At Home Corp., computer terminal maker Javelin Systems Inc., drugmaker Andrx Corp. and two companies that make the nuts and bolts of computer networks, QLogic Corp. and RF Micro Devices Inc.

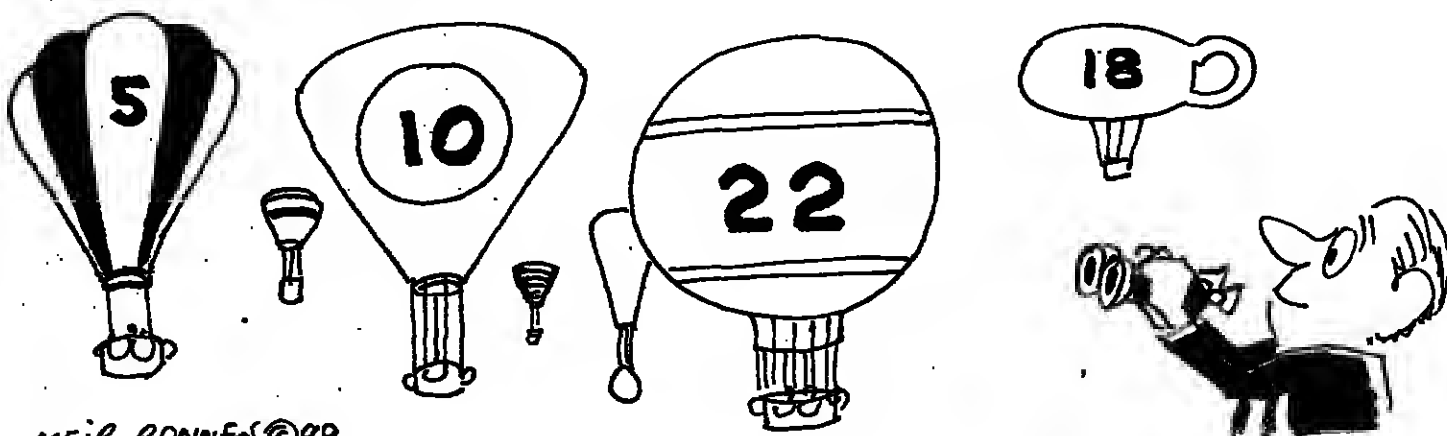
These companies are relatively new, without the long history of a Microsoft, which has fallen in value in only two of the 13 years since it first sold shares to the public. Shares of Dell have risen more than 200 percent in each of the past three years.

Cisco Systems has returned about 92% a year since it went public in 1990.

Microsoft, Dell, Cisco and Intel have the mystique that "they're untouchable and they can't be beat," said Oberweis.

Most people who seek comparable returns in other stocks don't find them, "but that doesn't mean we shouldn't look for it."

One characteristic of Dell and Microsoft is that they dominate businesses — personal computers and PC software, respectively —



MEIR RONEN/©99

that enjoyed a spurt of massive growth among consumers.

High-speed Internet access now offers similar growth potential, and At Home is in a good position to dominate the business, said Donald Selkin, chief market strategist for Joseph Gunnar & Co., a New York brokerage. He added the stock this year to his model portfolio, which returned 66% last year.

At Home, which provides Internet access for cable television subscribers, had \$48 million in revenue in 1998 and expects that to grow to \$400 million this year and \$2 billion by 2002. The average estimate of analysts surveyed by First Call Corp. is for the company to lose 9 cents a share this year and earn 45 cents in 2000.

At Home has about 330,000 users now, though that number should skyrocket as the company attracts Internet customers who now use slower telephone lines, Selkin said. At Home is 40% owned by the No. 2 US cable television company, Tele-Communications Inc., which is being acquired by AT&T Corp., the largest long-distance company, providing a large pool of potential customers for At Home.

The stock sells for about 27.5 times Selkin's estimate for At Home's 2000 revenue. "With any

of these Internet stocks, obviously you're going to get big moves up and big moves down, and you can trade on that, but this could be a good long-term story," said Selkin.

At Home sold shares to the public in mid-1997 at \$10.50 each, and the stock now sells for 103 1/16, about 10 times more.

In the past year, it has risen 233%, compared with 138% for Dell and 76% for Microsoft.

At Home already is a large company, with a market value of \$10.5b. Oberweis's \$22m. in assets is invested mostly in small and micro-capitalization stocks, the riskiest place to hunt for the next Microsoft.

"It is very, very difficult to know what the potential of a company is," said Oberweis. "That's why we really recommend that people buy 50 or 100 of these" small companies.

Sill, Andrx, with \$1b. in market value, and the \$72m. Javelin are among his favorites.

Andrx makes generic "controlled-release" drugs that release dosages at specific times and in specific bodily locations. It "potentially could be a very major pharmaceutical company," Oberweis said.

Earnings are expected to almost triple to \$1.46 this year from 49

cents a share in 1998, according to the average estimate of analysts surveyed by First Call. Analysts expect \$1.98 next year. Andrx sells for about 45 times this year's expected earnings per share.

The company went public in mid-1996 at \$2 a share and now sells for 66 1/2.

Javelin makes touch-screen computers used in stores and restaurants to ring up transactions, track inventory and analyze sales. The company's managers are ambitious, said Oberweis, whose firm owned 274,200 Javelin shares as of Dec. 31.

"These guys have big plans, big visions," he said. "They'll either crash and burn or they'll make it into a fairly big company."

McDonald's Corp. in January said it will use Javelin's Pentium Wedge touchscreen computer in new restaurants and in renovations of existing locations.

Analysts expect Javelin to earn 61 cents in the current fiscal year, which ends in June, more than double the 27 cents it earned last year. The average estimate is for 87 cents in 2000.

The stock, at 12 5/16, sells for about 20 times this year's estimated earnings. Javelin went public in October 1996 at \$5 a share, and sold

2.5 million more shares at 12 1/4 in a secondary offering on Feb. 12.

Growth in the computer business could also spell big gains for QLogic, which makes electronics that speed communications between computers and storage devices such as tape or disk drives, said Richard Driehaus, head of Driehaus Capital Management Inc., which oversees \$2.6 billion. The stock already has rocketed from 3 1/2 when it was spun off from Emulex Corp. in 1994 to 63 today, including a more than four-fold rise last year.

New Technology QLogic is benefiting from the shift to a new standard called fiber channel technology, which allows faster communications over a longer distance. "This fiber channel market is estimated to grow from around \$100m. in 1997 to \$10b. over the next five years," and QLogic could capture 30 to 50% of the market, Driehaus said. "We think it's a huge stock over time."

Driehaus also is betting on RF Micro Devices Inc., which makes integrated circuits for cellular phones. Its largest customer is Nokia Oyj, the world's largest cellular phone maker.

The shares, sold for 12 each in RF Micro's 1997 IPO, now fetch 77.

The Conference Circuit

By GREER FAY CASHMAN

10.3 A study day on Business Partnerships as a Level for Start-Up Success will be held in the conference room of the Israel Manufacturers Association, first floor, 29 Hamered Street, Tel Aviv, at 2 p.m.

10.3 Egyptian ambassador Mohamed Bassiouny will address the English Speaking Friends of Tel Aviv University on Egypt and Israel: Present Relations, in the Shemesh Hall of the David Building at TAU.

10.3 Haifa University, in conjunction with the Ben Zvi Center for Israel Studies, the Herzl Institute for Zionist Research and Teachings and the Haifa Branch of the Israel Information Center, is holding a two-day conference to mark the 30th Anniversary of the Death of Former Prime Minister Levi Eshkol. Conference sessions will take place on the 30th floor of the Eshkol Tower, at Haifa University. All the papers to be presented will focus on Eshkol as a pioneer, politician and statesman, and will examine his contribution to the evolution and history of the state. Some of the speakers, such as Aryeh (Liova) Eliav and Meir Amit, who worked in close cooperation with Eshkol, will make their presentations from both personal and general perspectives.

11.3 Advertising '99, the annual conference of Israel's advertising industry, will kick off at the Dan Panorama, Tel Aviv, at 8 a.m. Participants will hear nine representatives of leading agencies talk on subjects such as: the need for direct and sometimes crude messages for the Israeli market; creative and marketing considerations in the service of commercials; targeting ethnic and other special interest markets; commercials that lead to temptation; and balancing company and brand-

name advertising. For reservations, call 1(800) 800-888.

11.3 Dr. Tom Smith, director-general of the Social Survey National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago, will discuss Deliberative Polls and Informed Public Opinion at 5 p.m. in room 527 of the Naftali Building on the Tel Aviv University campus.

13.3 The Israel Association of Women's Health, in association with Hadassah Israel and Ely Lilly Israel, is holding a two-day health dialogue on The Healthy Woman - Body and Soul at Kibbutz Ramat Rachel on the outskirts of Jerusalem. Doctors Amy Avgar, Eileen Hoffman, Paula Rackoff, Carol Warsaw and Avraham Abelsars will talk about the emotionally healthy woman; preventing osteoporosis; the health impact on gender-based violence and the advantages of alternative medicine.

16.3 Avnat College on the Dead Sea is hosting a study day on Quality of the Environment in 2001 in Israel's Tourist and Hotel Industry. Speakers from Israel and abroad will address: sustainable tourism in Israel; Agenda 21 green globe; environmental management; health farms and spa resorts; intelligent building; Feng Shui and cyber marketing. For reservations and detailed information, call 1(800) 254-254.

17.3 The Dan Panorama Tel Aviv is the venue for BusinessNet '99, the annual conference for marketing, advertising and commerce via the Internet. Subjects on the agenda include: electronic mail as an optimal strategy; mass customization, the gateway to success; plus other riveting developments in cyber-business. For full details and reservations, call 1(800) 800-888.

The mini-minivan wars rev up in Geneva

GENEVA — Automakers from around the world will show their versions of one of Europe's most popular new vehicles, minivans built on compact-car platforms, at the Geneva International Motor Show, which opens Thursday.

Renault SA of France is the innovator and current leader in this new segment, in which 300,000 cars are sold annually. That number could rise to 2.8 million in six years, or 20 percent of the European market, analysts and carmakers say. Renault's success with its Megane Scenic moved other automakers to bring their own new minivans — also known as mini multiple-purpose-vehicles or mini MPVs — to Geneva, one of the most important showcases for new cars in Europe.

"They all want a piece of the action," said Arthur Maher, an auto industry consultant with J.D. Power LMC in Oxford, England.

Auto show visitors will see several versions of the small MPV, particularly

from Japanese automakers. The vehicles are popular with European motorists because they offer more space than a typical compact car, but are less expensive and use less gas than a regular van.

Carmakers like them because they can be built on an existing platform, such as Volkswagen AG's Golf, and sold at higher prices, while helping the automakers grab a piece of a growing market.

The Scenic is one of five versions of the Megane made by Renault, and is by far the most popular, accounting for about half of Megane sales. The Scenic was introduced in 1996 and costs about \$13,000 (\$20,900) in the UK.

It will face competition this spring, when General Motors Corp. brings out the Zafira, a version of its best-selling Astra.

PSA Peugeot's Citroen brand will introduce a version later.

Toyota Motor Corp.'s entry in the competition will be the Verso, a version of its

Yaris small car that debuts in 2000. The Verso is expected to be built in Toyota's new assembly plant in Valenciennes, France, which itself is still under construction, beginning in 2001.

Nissan Motor Co. will show its Tino, a vehicle that's expected to be built in Barcelona and sold beginning in 2000.

Mazda Motors Corp. will show its Premacy entry, while South Korea's Kia Motors Corp. will show its version to be sold later in the year.

Ford Motor Co. will bring out its version based on the Focus small car, while Volkswagen will offer a Golf-based MPV, both within two years.

Renault itself intends to take the MPV idea a step further in Geneva with Aventime, a concept car that is a mix between a minivan and a luxury coupe.

All these vehicles offer more room than the traditional station wagon. They rely on engineering wizardry such as lower floorboards and higher roof lines, as well as fold-down or removable rear seats.

The Zafira, for example, offers rear seats that slide down flat to the floor at the press of a button. Scenic's rear seats have to be manually removed. Nissan promises Tino can be all things to all people: a playroom for children and a living room for families on holiday.

Those claims might be excessive, but for car companies the appeal is that the vehicles are mostly based on existing models, allowing them to reduce engineering, parts and manufacturing costs.

"The equation in the industry now is to derive as many models as it can off the same platform and running gear," said

Ian Robertson, an auto industry consultant with the Economist Intelligence Unit in London. The small MPVs allow carmakers to "push a lot of standard running gear further up market and into higher margin products."

GM, for example, will sell Zafira beginning this spring with a starting price of about \$15,000 in the UK, a premium of over \$1,000 over Astra.

It's not clear whether all these new products will expand the market or simply subdivide it. Analysts said Renault's Scenic sales are likely to suffer with competition that offers newer designs.

"The question is, with all these new ones, will we be looking at new sales or the cannibalization of existing models?" said Charles Moss, an auto industry consultant at J.D. Power LMC.

The Scenic and other small MPVs aren't sold in the US, where cheaper gas prices allow people to buy larger vehicles than in Europe. The US market for

small cars has been shrinking in recent years as buyers shift to pickup trucks, larger vans and sport-utility vehicles. Car sales fell 1.6 percent in the US last year, while truck sales grew 8.2%.

In addition to the small cars at the show, DaimlerChrysler AG will show its redesigned flagship luxury coupe, the CL. Bayerische Motoren Werke AG will show its new 3-series coupe, and Ferrari SpA will show its 360 Modena, a replacement for the F355 luxury sports car.

The Geneva show draws 700,000 visitors, 4,000 journalists and hundreds of vehicles. Among the executives expected will be Ford Motor Co. Chief Executive Jac Nasser, DaimlerChrysler AG Co-Chairmen Juergen Schrempp and Robert Eaton, and Volkswagen AG Chairman Ferdinand Piech.

While the show opens to visitors Thursday, journalists will get previews Tuesday and Wednesday. The show runs through March 21. (Bloomberg)

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AVIS - We try harder

Gretzky-less Rangers keep winning

BOSTON (AP) — Mike Richter made 37 saves as the New York Rangers beat the Boston Bruins 3-1 on Sunday to boost their playoff hopes.

John MacLean, Niklas Sundstrom and Kevin Stevens scored as the Rangers extended their unbeaten streak to five games (4-0-1), all compiled since Wayne Gretzky was sidelined with a neck injury on March 29.

Richter extended his personal unbeaten streak to 4-0-1, giving up only a goal to Landon Wilson, as the Rangers moved within two points of the Bruins for the eighth and final playoff berth in the Eastern Conference.

Stars 4, Blues 3

Mike Modano and Jere Lehtinen scored first-period goals and Dallas went on to a home victory.

Jamie Langenbrunner and Pat Verbeek added goals against Jim Carey in Carey's first start for the Blues as the Stars improved to 10-1-2 in their last 13 games.

Avalanche 3, Penguins 1

Joe Sakic, Milan Hejduk and Claude Lemieux scored third-period goals to lead Colorado to a road win.

Devils 4, Islanders 2

Dennis Pederson and Petr Sykora each scored a goal and assisted on another as host New Jersey climbed within two points of the Eastern Conference lead.

Brendan Morrison and Patrick Elias closed in on the Ottawa Senators (36-18-8) for best conference record. Ottawa has two games in hand on New Jersey.

Flyers 1, Sabres 1

Visiting Philadelphia's Valeri Zepukhin broke a scoreless tie midway through the third period, but the Flyers gave up a late goal to Buffalo's Darryl Shannon for a tie.

Buffalo rookie goalie Martin Biron made 30 saves in place of injured superstar Dominik Hasek. Philadelphia's John Vanbiesbrouck made 21 stops, including two in overtime.

Mighty Ducks 3, Red Wings 1

Steve Rucchin scored a short-handed goal after missing three games with a broken nose and Teemu Selanne set a club record with points in 16 consecutive games as Anaheim won at home.

Marty McInnis and Tomas Sandstrom also scored and Guy Hebert made 33 saves, helping the

Ducks establish a club record with their seventh consecutive victory and 13th in 16 games.

Steve Yzerman scored his 26th goal for Detroit.

Coyotes 4, Predators 3

Keith Tkachuk scored two of his three goals to spark a three-goal first period as host Phoenix snapped a four-game losing streak.

Tkachuk has scored five of his team-high 27 goals in the last two games for the Coyotes, who won for the second time in their last 11 games. Tkachuk's eighth career hat-trick, his first of the season, pulled him within four of Dale Hawerchuk's franchise record.

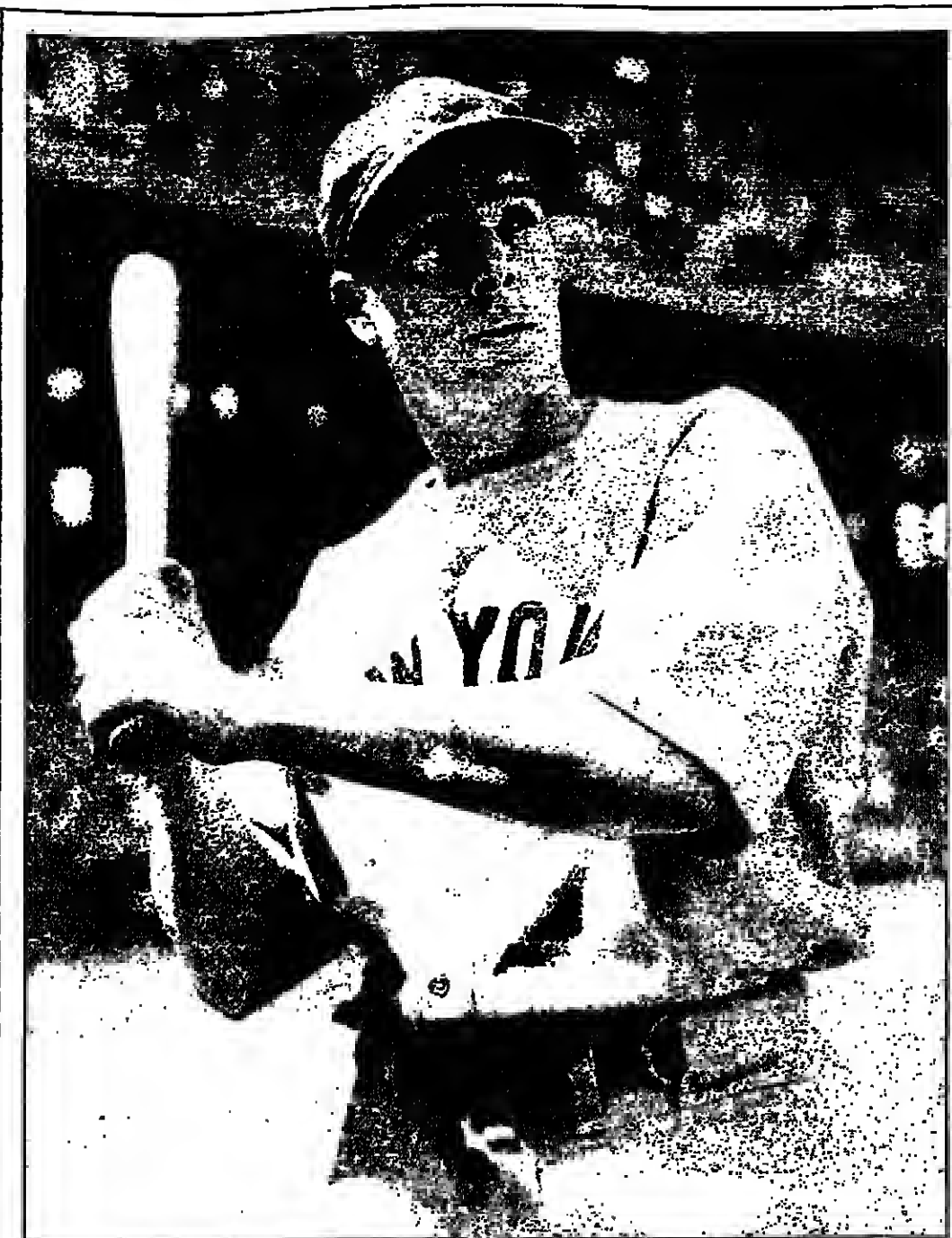
Blackhawks 2, Canucks 2

Adrian Aucoin scored in the third period to give host Vancouver a tie and snap a three-game home losing streak.

Aucoin scored his 16th goal of the season — third among NHL defensemen — at 1:26. His flustering shot bounced off the shoulder of Chicago defenseman Doug Zmolek and bounced past goaltender Jocelyn Thibault.

Alexander Mogilny also scored for the Canucks, who fell out of playoff contention while going 1-3-1 during a five-game homestand. Eric Daze and Ethan Moreau scored for Chicago.

EASTERN CONFERENCE							WESTERN CONFERENCE						
Atlantic Division							Central Division						
W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA		W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA	
New Jersey	35	21	8	78	191	161	Detroit	32	26	6	70	191	163
Philadelphia	32	21	15	73	192	156	St. Louis	28	26	10	68	172	160
Pittsburgh	32	21	9	73	194	172	Washington	22	34	4	51	151	208
N.Y. Rangers	27	28	8	62	178	175	Chicago	18	37	9	45	142	198
N.L. Islanders	19	38	8	46	152	197							
Northeast Division							Northwest Division						
Ottawa	36	18	8	80	182	131	Colorado	32	24	8	72	177	159
Toronto	35	23	5	75	201	184	Edmonton	25	29	10	60	178	168
Buffalo	29	21	13	71	169	139	Calgary	23	30	10	56	165	178
Boston	27	26	10	64	143	148	Vancouver	19	35	10	48	154	200
Montreal	25	30	9	59	153	169							
Southeast Division							Pacific Division						
Carolina	28	23	13	69	164	157	Dallas	40	12	10	90	181	125
Florida	27	26	10	64	143	148	Phoenix	31	22	10	72	157	149
Washington	22	31	5	59	167	168	Anaheim	30	25	9	69	172	154
Tampa Bay	15	42	5	35	133	224	San Jose	22	28	14	58	141	152
							Los Angeles	23	34	5	51	145	172



IN HIS PRIME — Joe DiMaggio in 1941, the year he set the consecutive game hit streak and won the AL's MVP award, beating out Ted Williams, who batted .406.

Remembering a quiet hero

Near the end of his career, at a time when his body often ached from nagging injuries, Joe DiMaggio was asked whether he wasn't occasionally tempted to relax on the field, to coast for a couple of innings.

His answer spoke volumes about the kind of player he was. "Never," he said. "Somebody might be out there, watching me for the first time. Joe D. didn't want any fun, new or old, to feel disappointed."

The first time I saw DiMaggio in 1947, I was disappointed so I booed him. Not because he didn't live up to expectations. Quite the opposite.

He rattled a double off the left field wall at New York's Polo Grounds, helping the Yankees beat my team, the New York Giants, in the annual Mayor's Trophy game.

That did not sit well with this 8-year-old, seeing his first major league baseball game.

So I booed perhaps the most graceful, classic player of his time. Booed him good.

Years later, when I knew better, I felt guilty. Joe D. was not to be booed. He was to be admired, not only for his skills, which were plentiful, but for his style, which was special.

For one generation of New York fans, the debate raged over baseball's best center fielder — Willie Mays or the Duke.

For the generation before that one, there was no argument. It was Joe D.

DiMaggio played baseball with a sense of dignity. He rarely showed emotion. He would never think of standing at home plate, admiring his home runs. That would be showing up the pitcher.

He would never preen and prance the way modern players often do. There were no contrived gestures, no punching the air, no pointing to the sky.

DiMaggio would simply put

MY CALL

By HAL BOCK

his head down and trot around the bases, shake hands as he crossed the plate, and head for the dugout. He was the quintessential professional, dignified and graceful, a quiet hero.

He covered center field so effortlessly. He would glide after the ball with long, classic strides, looping across the outfield like a gazelle. Maybe that's why they called him the Yankee Clipper. He was never out of position, never caught napping.

None of this was a particularly big deal with him. He played poker-faced baseball, effortlessly and expressionless.

The only exception was in the 1947 World Series against the Brooklyn Dodgers, when he hit a ball to the deepest part of left field at Yankee Stadium with two men on base. Al Giofriddo, a journeyman outfielder who had just entered the game, ran it down and made the catch in front of the bullpen, just as DiMaggio was reaching second base. Joe D. kicked the dirt in disgust. It was a rare peek behind the public facade.

Years after his record 56-game hitting streak, DiMaggio revealed the pressure he felt. "I was able to control myself," he said. "That doesn't mean I wasn't dying inside."

He demanded that on Oldtimers' Day at Yankee Stadium, he always be the last to be introduced, as a gesture to his status. In 1968, the year Mickey Mantle retired, the club chose to introduce Mantle last. DiMaggio viewed it as a slight, and it strained his relationship with the front office for years.

DiMaggio was a private man, on the field and off. At one

Oldtimers' Day at Yankee Stadium, many of his ex-teammates gathered in a lounge near the clubhouse, telling stories to and about one another. DiMaggio sat alone at a corner table, a solitary figure.

And yet, his closest friend when he played was pitcher Lefty Gomez, the perpetual life of the party. "I wish I could be like Lefty," he once confided to restaurateur Toots Shor.

But he couldn't. It just wasn't in him.

If you gained his confidence, he could be a charming storyteller. Once, when I asked him about his 56-game hitting streak, DiMaggio lit up as he told an anecdote, laughing as he recalled the details.

The only subject that was off-limits was his short, stormy marriage to Marilyn Monroe.

Years after Monroe's death, DiMaggio came to the offices of The Associated Press for an interview. When he arrived, he saw a poster-sized picture of Monroe — the famous AP photo of her skirts billowing as she stood over a subway grating — hanging in the hall.

Seething, he made an immediate U-turn and left the building.

For DiMaggio, privacy was always hard to maintain.

In 1996, he was flying from Miami to New York to throw out the first ball at the World Series. Arriving at the gate for his flight, he was ushered across the hall, seated out of the way at an empty gate, where he could remain fairly undisturbed.

DiMaggio was recognizable, everywhere he went. Once, I walked one block with him in Manhattan. In the streets, he must have been stopped a half-dozen times by vendors, cabbies, pedestrians, all calling to him.

"Hey, Joe D., how you doing?"

And that was more than 40 years after he played his last game.

Coffee on television to a generation that never saw him play. In more recent years, he devoted himself to his grandchildren and great-grandchildren and to raising money for the Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital in Hollywood, Florida.

He didn't seek the limelight, but lived his life slipping into and out of it, uncomfortable when it shined on him. The story goes that when Monroe squealed delightedly that she had been cheered by tens of thousands of troops in Korea, and told DiMaggio he couldn't imagine what that was like, he deadpanned, "Oh, yes, I can."

No ballplayer ever heard more cheers than DiMaggio did during The Streak. There was a song written about it, and crowds waited for him to come to town. In city after city, he kept The Streak alive, getting at least one hit in every game from May 15 until July 17 in Cleveland — 56 games. No one has come close since.

During an appearance in 1991, commemorating the 50th anniversary of The Streak, DiMaggio expressed surprise it was still a

record.

"There are a lot of great ballplayers," he said. "One day, someone's going to come along and break it. But I've been saying that for 50 years."

Pete Rose fell 12 games short of tying DiMaggio during his best challenge in 1978.

During The Streak, DiMaggio batted .408 with 91 hits in 223 at-bats, 15 homers and 55 RBIs.

It took a pair of remarkable fielding plays by third baseman Ken Keltner in the 57th game to stop DiMaggio. He then immediately began another streak of 16 games — meaning he batted safely in 72 of 73 games.

There was no demonstration of disappointment that day in Cleveland when Keltner robbed him of two hits. That typified the stoic DiMaggio, who rarely displayed emotion.

DiMaggio arrived in New York in May 1936, at age 21. He introduced himself to Yankees fans with two singles and a triple in his first game, and never slowed until retirement.

Before DiMaggio, baseball's

Carter wins rookie shootout

TORONTO (AP) — Vince Carter scored 26 points and outplayed Paul Pierce in a matchup of two of the NBA's top rookies as the Toronto Raptors defeated the Boston Celtics, 105-92 on Sunday.

Carter scored 14 second-quarter points to spark a 21-8 run as the Raptors beat the Celtics for the second time this season after losing in their seven previous encounters.

Pierce, the NBA's leading rookie scorer, was held to seven points by Carter on 3-for-11 shooting. Antoine Walker led the Celtics with 29 points, but was 4-for-11 from the line.

Wizards 103, 76ers 95 (OT) Jeff McInnis, playing after Rod Strickland was injured, scored six of his career-high 12 points in overtime as Washington won on the road.

Allen Iverson scored 30 points for the 76ers, including a sensational drive between three defenders that helped send the game to overtime.

Juwan Howard scored 28 points for the Wizards, who won despite going nine minutes without a field goal in the second half.

Lakers 97, Jazz 89 Kobe Bryant scored 24 points, and Shaquille O'Neal added 23 points and 16 rebounds as Los Angeles snapped Utah's home winning streak at 20 games.

It was the seventh straight victory for the Lakers, who have not lost since Kurt Rambis took over as coach and Dennis Rodman joined the team.

Spurs 106, Nuggets 96 Tim Duncan had 34 points and 13 rebounds as visiting San Antonio won its fourth straight.

David Robinson added 16 points, Jaren Jackson 14 and Avery Johnson 12 points and 14 assists for the Spurs, who banded the Nuggets their fourth straight loss.

Kings 94, Mavericks 89 Chris Webber had 18 points, 13 rebounds and seven assists as Sacramento won at home.

Corliss Williamson added 15 points for the Kings, while Gary Trent led Dallas with 18 points and 14 rebounds.

T'wolves 88, SuperSonics 77 Kevin Garnett had 19 points and 14 rebounds, and reserve Malik Sealy added a season-high 18 points as Minnesota handed host Seattle its third straight loss.

Gary Payton scored 20 points on 9-for-27 shooting for the Sonics, who are 3-7 after a 6-0 start.

Trail Blazers 111, Rockets 71 Isaiah Rider scored 21 points as host Portland improved its record to an NBA-best 13-3.

The Blazers, who have won six



Minnesota's Stephon Marbury (1) drives around Seattle's Billy Owens in first-quarter action. The Timberwolves won 88-77.

straight and 11 of 12, shot 55 percent for the game and 75 percent in the lopsided fourth quarter.

Hakeem Olajuwon had 16 points for the Rockets, who shot only 31 percent from the field.

In games reported in yesterday's edition:

Pacers 83, Heat 72 Reggie Miller scored 16 points and Rik Smits added 14 as Indianapolis won at home.

Alonzo Mourning led the Heat with 17 points and 13 rebounds, but had five of Miami's 18 turnovers.

Knicks 97, Nets 86 Patrick Ewing scored 18 of his 30 points in a third-quarter outburst that helped New York win its eighth straight home game.

EASTERN CONFERENCE				
Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Orlando	14	4	.778	—
Miami	12	5	.706	.5
New York	10	7	.588	.5
Philadelphia	10	7	.588	.5
Boston	7	8	.467	.5
Washington	7	9	.438	.5
New Jersey	3	13	.188	10
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Indiana	12	5	.706	—
Charlotte	9	5	.643	.5
Detroit	10	7	.588	.5
Atlanta	8	8	.500	.5
Cleveland	7	8	.467	.5
Chicago	4	11	.267	.5
Midwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Utah	13	4	.765	—
Minnesota	11	6	.647	.5
Houston	10	8	.559	.5
San Antonio	10	8	.559	.5
Dallas	6	13	.316	.5
Denver	5	13	.278	.5
Vancouver	4	13	.235	.5
Pacific Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Portland	13	3	.813	—
L.A. Lakers	13	6	.684	.5
Seattle	9	7	.563	.5
Phoenix	9	8	.529	.5
Sacramento	9	9	.500	.5
Golden State	7	10	.412	.5
L.A. Clippers	8	15	.300	12.5

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Cowens quits Hornets

FORT MILL, SC (AP) — Dave Cowens has resigned as coach of the Charlotte Hornets, unhappy with being one of the NBA's lowest-paid coaches after leading the team to unprecedented success in his first two seasons.

The team did not announce an immediate successor, but the players were told it will be assistant Paul Silas, who played with Cowens for the Boston Celtics in the 1970s.

Cowens signed a 3-year, \$1.89 million contract in May 1996. The contract called for him to get salaries of \$755,000 his first year, \$625,000 last year and \$675,000 this season.

When Cowens went to owner George Shinn and said he felt he should receive the NBA average of \$1.3m, the Hornets offered him a four-year, \$5.2 m extension. But Shinn reportedly withdrew the offer in February 1998 because he didn't feel Cowens was being appreciative enough.

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San Antonio		23 23 23 25-25
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Rangers on a roll

A touch of class



Page 17



Page 18

Sports Editors: Joe Hoffman & Ori Lewis

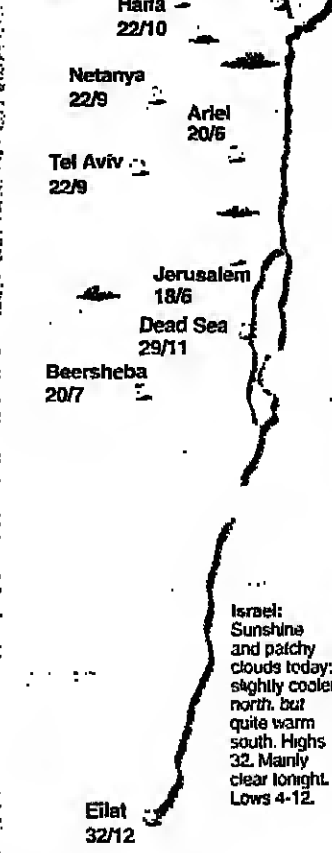
ELZALZ

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THE WEATHER

ISRAEL

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ISRAEL CITIES

City	Today	High	Low	Wednesday	High	Low
Ariel	20/68	64/74	18/64	43/68		
Beersheba	20/68	74/84	18/64	43/68		
Dead Sea	20/68	11/52	26/79	10/50		
El Al	20/68	12/33	26/79	10/50		
Haifa	20/68	10/50	19/68	10/50		
Jerusalem	18/64	64/74	18/64	43/68		
Nazareth	21/72	43/68	18/64	10/50		
Nesher	22/71	43/68	18/64	10/50		
Tel Aviv	22/71	64/74	18/64	43/68		
Tiberias	24/75	74/84	21/70	54/11		

INTERNATIONAL CITIES

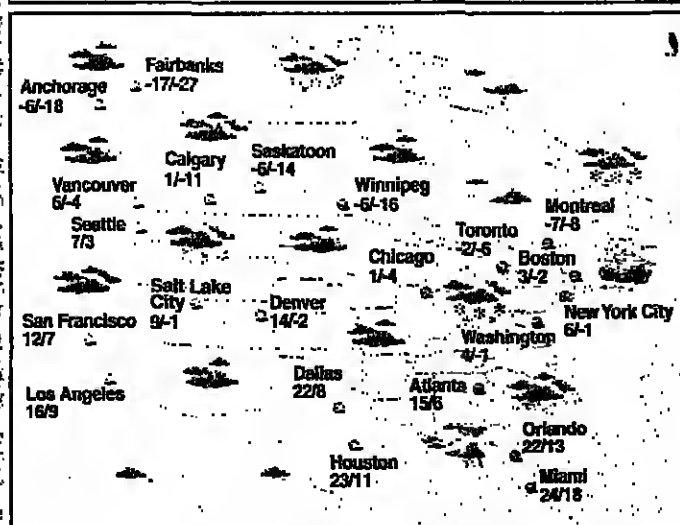
City	Today	High	Low	Wednesday	High	Low
Amsterdam	6/46	64/74	18/64	43/68		
Beijing	15/59	37/70	4/39	-2/20		
Berlin	6/43	23/34	12/33	10/50		
Buenos Aires	8/48	64/74	18/64	43/68		
Calgary	24/75	16/29	23/33	9/28		
Chicago	1/34	-2/29	13/4	-2/29		
Frankfurt	4/36	37/48	6/46	7/44		
Hong Kong	24/75	16/29	23/33	9/28		
Los Angeles	15/59	37/70	4/39	-2/20		
London	6/43	23/34	12/33	10/50		
Madrid	17/62	64/74	18/64	43/68		
Mexico City	27/80	9/48	26/79	10/50		
Montreal	7/20	8/18	23/33	-2/20		
Moscow	8/48	13/24	27/37	8/18		
New York	8/43	13/24	7/44	0/32		
Paris	9/48	74/84	18/64	43/68		
Prague	6/43	64/74	18/64	43/68		
Rio de Janeiro	33/81	25/77	30/36	24/75		
Rome	15/59	37/70	4/39	-2/20		
Sydney	20/71	16/29	23/33	9/28		
Tokyo	9/48	64/74	18/64	43/68		
Toronto	2/29	-2/29	13/4	-2/29		
Vancouver	8/48	43/68	18/64	43/68		
Washington	8/48	43/68	18/64	43/68		
Zurich	10/50	74/84	18/64	43/68		

Weather (W): sunny, pe early cloudy, clouds at showers, 1-4 hours, rain, snow, ice, snow, ice

MOON PHASES

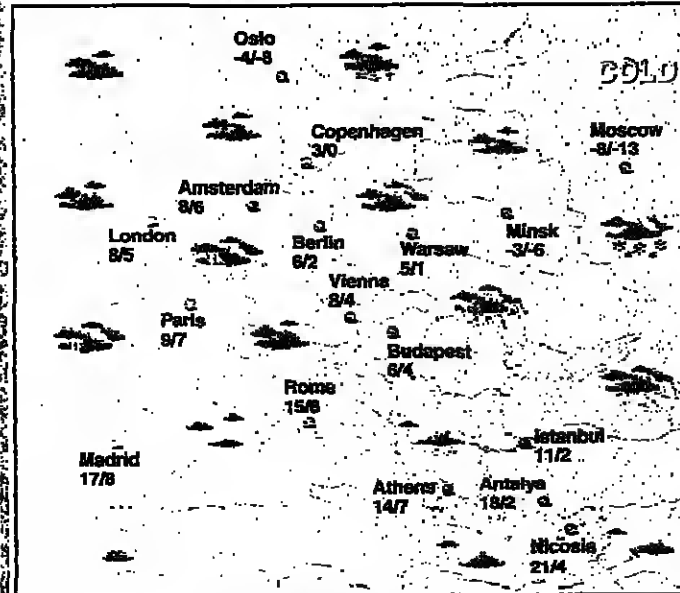
Last	New	Full	Full
Mar 10	Mar 17	Mar 24	Apr 1

NORTH AMERICA WEATHER TODAY



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ELZALZ Weekends

Duke heavy favorite for NCAA crown

BASKETBALL
NCAA Tournament

NEW YORK (AP) — The question was first heard in early February. Is national No. 1 Duke going to lose a game in the Atlantic Coast Conference this season?

When the Blue Devils capped a first-ever 16-0 league season with a 20-point win at North Carolina last weekend, the question changed. Can anybody beat these guys?

After this weekend's ACC tournament, which the Blue Devils ripped through with three wins by an average of 25 points, the question was altered again. Can anybody stay close to these guys?

Welcome to the 1999 NCAA tournament, the 64-team competition with the subtitle: "Is second place really so bad?"

What makes the Blue Devils such a heavy favorite is a 33-1 record, a 27-game winning streak, only three wins by less than double figures and 13 by 30 or more. Then there are all-conference players like Trajan Langdon, Elton Brand and William Avery.

Don't forget Mike Krzyzewski, the coach who has led Duke to seven Final Fours and two national championships. There's even a tinge of revenge as the Blue Devils had one of their most devastating losses ever last year to Kentucky in the regional final at St. Petersburg, Florida, the site of this year's Final Four.

East Regionals

How can anybody pick against Duke? The Blue Devils will cruise to the East Regionals at the Meadowlands, their favorite Final Four launching pad, with wins over Florida A&M and College of Charleston, and will be joined there by Wisconsin, Cincinnati and Miami.

Cincinnati, the only team to beat the Blue Devils this season, just won't have the last-second heroics it did in that November 28 game in the Great Alaska Shootout.

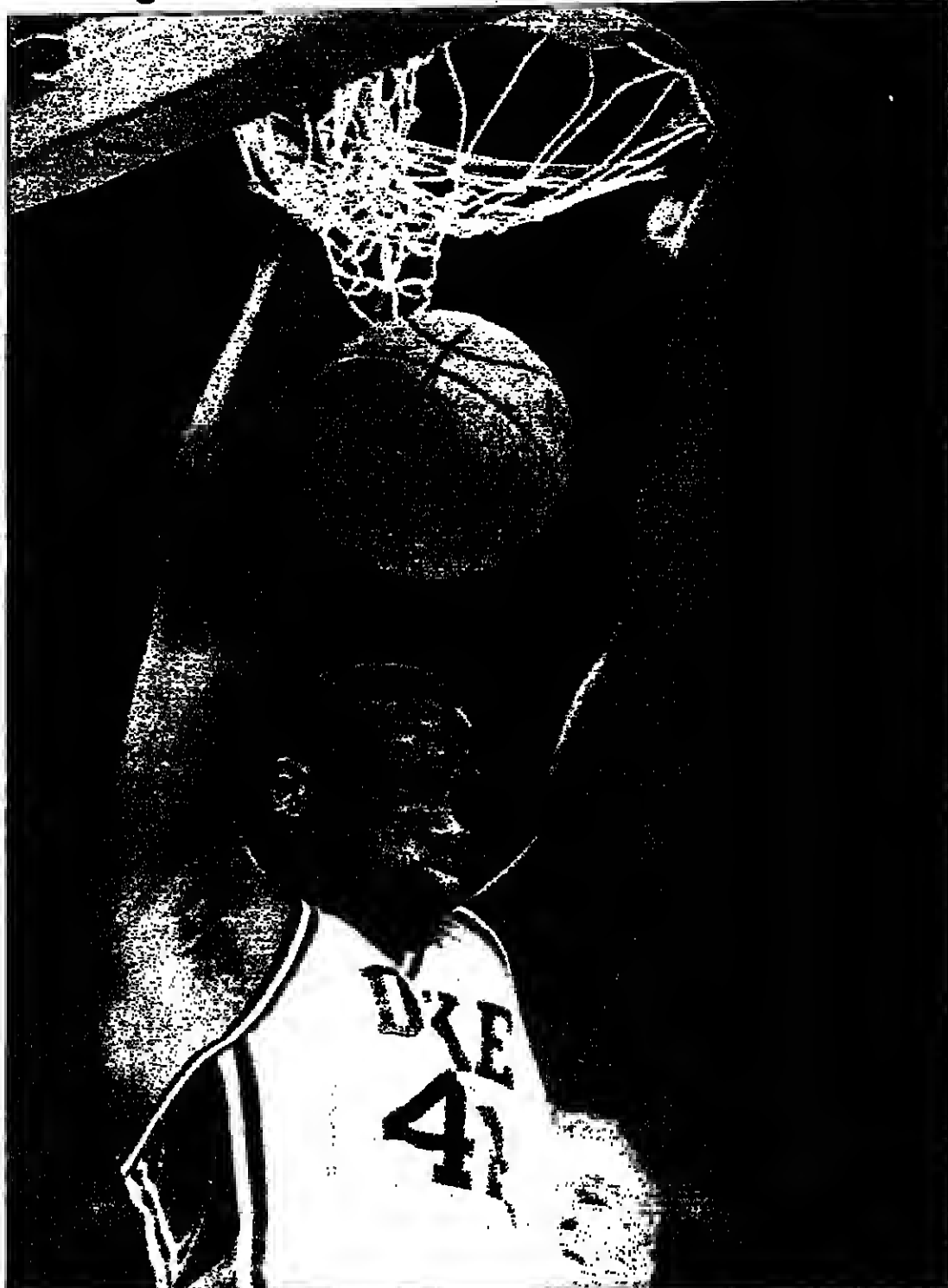
Midwest Regional

The Blue Devils will play the Midwest Regional champion in the national semifinals.

Look for Kentucky to be that team as the defending national champion makes a Duke-like fourth straight Final Four appearance.

The Wildcats will have some scares, however, as sixth-seeded Kansas, with its lowest seeding since 1988, makes some noise in the second round and Utah, the team Kentucky beat for the title last season, provides a regional semifinal thriller.

The Wildcats will make their trip to St. Petersburg after a regional final win over North Carolina



TOP DOG — Duke's Elton Brand dunks over the North Carolina defense in the Blue Devils' 96-73 victory to win the Atlantic Coast Conference championship game at Charlotte. Brand was the game's high scorer with 24 points.

Charlotte, the team that will grab the nation's attention with "solid" play and kiss-blowing 3-point shooter Diego Guevara.

South Regional

The South Regional will have the best of the second-round story lines when George Washington meets its former coach, Mike Jarvis, and St. John's. The second round will also have the first of the No. 1 seeds leaving when Syracuse stuns Auburn.

Syracuse will run out of luck

against Ohio State in the regional semifinals and the Buckeyes' game against Maryland in the final will also be a former Boston College coaches' reunion.

Maryland's Gary Williams will get his first Final Four appearance, carried there with a sensational tournament from guard Steve Francis.

West Regional

The Terrapins' opponent in the national semifinals will be Connecticut, another team led by a

coach, Jim Calhoun, making his Final Four debut.

The Huskies will have some fun running their way past Missouri in the second round and Arkansas in the third.

Stanford and North Carolina will get back within a game of returning to the Final Four for a second straight year. The Tar Heels will get second-year coach Bill Guthridge back there but the rematch of last year's regional final with

Connecticut won't turn out as well. The Final Four will have Duke getting revenge on Kentucky for last year's game and Connecticut prevailing in what should be an entertaining game that doesn't need a shot clock.

It will be Duke and Connecticut, the only teams to hold the No. 1 ranking this season, playing for the whole thing. Then it's time to ask: Can anybody beat these guys? Can anybody stay close?

NCAA Tournament Seedings

SOUTH

1. Auburn.
2. Maryland.
3. St. John's.
4. Ohio State.
5. UCLA.
6. Indiana.
7. Louisville.
8. Syracuse.
9. Oklahoma State.
10. Creighton.
11. George Washington.
12. Detroit.
13. Murray State.
14. Stanford.
15. Valparaiso.
16. Winthrop.

WEST

1. Connecticut.
2. Stanford.
3. North Carolina.
4. Arkansas.
5. Iowa.
6. Florida.
7. Minnesota.
8. Missouri.
9. New Mexico.
10. Gonzaga.
11. Pennsylvania.
12. Alabama-Birmingham.
13. Siena.
14. Weber State.
15. Alcorn State.
16. Texas-San Antonio.

EAST

1. Duke.
2. Miami.
3. Cincinnati.
4. Tennessee.
5. Wisconsin.
6. Temple.
7. Texas.
8. College of Charleston.
9. Tulsa.
10. Purdue.
11. Kent.
12. Southwest Missouri State.
13. Delaware.
14. George Mason.
15. Lafayette.
16. Florida A&M.

MIDWEST

1. Michigan State.
2. Utah.
3. Kentucky.
4. Arizona.
5. North Carolina Charlotte.
6. Kansas.
7. Washington.
8. Villanova.
9. Mississippi.
10. Miami, Ohio.
11. Evansville.
12. Rhode Island.
13. Oklahoma.
14. New Mexico State.
15. Arkansas State.
16. Mount St. Mary's.

West Indies dismissed for 51 as Australia win first Test

PORT-OF-SPAIN, Trinidad (Reuters) — West Indies collapsed to their lowest Test match total of 51 and lost the first cricket Test against Australia by 312 runs yesterday.

West Indies had crumbled to 16 for five at lunch and were all out in less than an hour after the break. The innings lasted only 19.1 overs with all 10 wickets falling in the last 11 of them.

Pacemen Glenn McGrath and Jason Gillespie did the damage but several of the wickets fell to inept shots. Man-of-the-match McGrath took five for 28 for his first 10-wicket Test match haul. Gillespie uprooted Pedro Collins' middle stump to end the slaughter and finish with four for 18.

West Indies, who came into the series on the back of a 5-0 rout in South Africa, recorded their previous lowest total of 53 against Pakistan in Faisalabad in 1986.

Yesterday's 102 minute mauling also erased the old record for their lowest score against Australia — 78 in

Sydney during 1951-52 — and their lowest score at home, which was 102 against England at Bridgetown in 1934-35.

Skipper Brian Lara, who was appointed captain for only the first two of the four Tests in the series said: "Our batting is struggling at the moment. We, as a team, need to look at that immediately and see how we can get out of it."

Lara top-scored with 62 in the first innings but fell second ball for three yesterday. Only wicketkeeper Ridley Jacobs reached double figures, scoring 19. The next highest was Curtly Ambrose with six.

"Getting 50 and 60s is not enough," said Lara. "I need to get 100s, especially with so many inexperienced guys in the team."

It was the perfect way for Steve Waugh to begin his spell as captain following the retirement of Mark Taylor.

"It was a great feeling. I was proud to lead the guys out there today," he said. "The bowling was fantastic."

He felt Australia's first innings of 269 laid the foundation for what became an easy victory.

"I thought it was a great team effort but the first day really set it up for us nicely," said Waugh.

Yesterday had begun well for West Indies with the last three Australian second innings wickets falling for 34. They were all out for 261.

Courtney Walsh took his Test match haul to 404 with the wickets of Shane Warne and Stuart MacGill. But the touring team hit back immediately, ripping through West Indies' top order to leave them in disarray when lunch was taken early because of rain.

The shambolic nature of West Indies' innings was aptly illustrated by the dismissal of Mervyn Dillon — run out by Greg Blewett without facing a ball when trying to scramble an impossible single.

The West Indies have little time to recover and regroup as the second Test of the four-Test series begins in Kingston, Jamaica, on Saturday.

Blue Devils finish season at No. 1

NEW YORK (AP) — Duke, Michigan State, Connecticut and Auburn, the top four seeds in the NCAA tournament, finished in that order in the final AP college basketball poll of the season.

It was the third No. 1 finish for the Blue Devils (32-1), who entered the NCAA tournament on top of the rankings in 1986 and 1992, the latter the year they repeated as national champions.

The top seed in the East Regional, and winners of 27 straight, the Blue Devils received 69 of 70 first-place votes and 1,749 points from the nationwide media panel.

Michigan State (29-4), the top seed in the Midwest, received the other No. 1 vote and 1,654 points, 19 more than Connecticut (28-2), the top seed in the West.

Auburn (27-3), the top seed in the South, was followed in the Top Ten by Maryland, Utah, Stanford, Kentucky, St. John's and Miami.

Cincinnati dropped four spots to lead the Second Ten and was followed by Arizona, North Carolina, Ohio State, UCLA, College of Charleston, Arkansas, Wisconsin, Indiana and Tennessee.

The last five ranked teams were Iowa, Kansas, Florida, North Carolina Charlotte and New Mexico.

Kansas, the Big 12 champions, moved back into the rankings after a three-week absence, while North Carolina Charlotte, the Conference USA champions, entered the Top 25 for the first time this season. The 49ers were ranked for three weeks last season.

Hap. J'lem reiterate threat to boycott State Cup final

By ORI LEWIS

The Israel Basketball Association has warned Hapoel Jerusalem that it will have to face the consequences of its actions if the club decides to boycott the State Cup final against Maccabi Tel Aviv next week.

The Jerusalemites yesterday called a press conference and repeated their threat not to participate in the final scheduled for next Thursday.

The league leaders recently began calling for the final to be moved to a neutral venue, claiming that the Tel Avivians would have an unfair advantage by playing at Yad Elihu venue of the semifinals and final for many years, which is also Tel Aviv's home court.

The unprecedented move by Jerusalem has forced the IBA's presidium to convene an urgent meeting this afternoon, following which they will underline the severity of the Jerusalemites' actions and warn of the grave situation.

"The IBA has already convened and has heard Hapoel Jerusalem's

claims. It has said it will look at alternative arrangements from next season in the event that Maccabi Tel Aviv reach the State Cup final," IBA spokeswoman Bruria Bigman told The Jerusalem Post yesterday.

"But with only a few weeks having passed since the request was first made, it is too late to make alternative arrangements. Hapoel Jerusalem knew full well that the final was scheduled for Yad Elihu, they could have objected then," she continued.

Hapoel Jerusalem club president Danny Klein told the gathered media that the time has come to put a stop to Maccabi Tel Aviv's unfair advantage.

"We have said it before and I repeat, we will not turn up for the final if it is not moved from Yad Elihu. If an alternative, more just solution can be found, we will play. The time has come to put things right. It is high time we change the system whereby we already know in August who the champions are going to be and who will represent Israel in Europe," Klein said.

And Today's Winner of the Steimatzky Prize is

Danny Zack, Ashdod

הסדרה מן האל